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Mirza
1852



THE
BOOK
OF
THE BOUDOIR.

BY LADY MORGAN.

“Je n’enseigne pas; je raconte.”

MONTAIGNE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

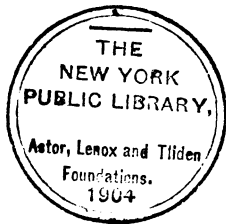
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TO THE READER.

THE first page of the following work tells "its being's aim and object." It is not worth the gravity of a preface; and will probably escape the distinction of a criticism. It is of a species scarcely admitted into the dignity of British literature; and belongs to that light class of writing in which the French alone excel. Its character is essentially egotistical, and its style inevitably careless. Time and labour might perhaps have cleared it of both these faults, and have rendered it a better work: but it would not then have been the work it was intended to be—if, indeed, it was intended to be any thing.

The MS. volumes, from which its pages were extracted, have composed themselves; and I have copied not always what was best, but what was safest and most inoffensive. Living, as I occasionally have lived, among whatever is most noted, eminent, and distinguished, with reminiscences of all, I have yet confined myself to the mention of those to whom we are already posterity, or to those who have been so much and so long before the world, as

to have become the property of the public. In all, I have found much good; and of all, I have said much: for, whatever party calumny may have put forth to the contrary, any severity which may have appeared in my writings has been directed against principles rather than persons. I have written, "from my youth, up," under the influence of one great and all-pervading cause, Ireland and its wrongs. Truth to tell, it was not a very gracious inspiration; and it frequently opposed opinions, inevitably tinged with bitterness, to a temperament, which those who know me in private life, will vouch for being as cheery and as genial, as ever went to that strange medley of pathos and humour,—the Irish character.

But the day is now fast approaching, when all that is Irish will fall into its natural position; when fair play will be given to national tendencies, and when the sarcastic author of the O'Donells and the O'Briens, having nothing to find fault with, will be reduced to write, "*à l'eau rose*," books for boudoirs, or albums for ladies' dressing-rooms. Among the multitudinous effects of Catholic emancipation, I do not hesitate to predict a change in the character of Irish authorship.

I cannot, however, give this little work to the public without a word as to its title; because I

never will, knowingly, contribute to a delusion, however innocent. All who have the supreme felicity of haunting great houses, are aware, that those odd books, which are thrown on round tables, or in the recesses of windows, to amuse the loungee of the moment, and are not in the catalogue of the library, are frequently stamped, in gold letters, with the name of the room to which they are destined: as thus;—"Elegant Extracts, Drawing-room;" "Spirit of the Journals, Saloon," &c. &c. As my Book of the Boudoir kept its place in the little room which bore that title, and was never admitted into my bureau of official authorship, it took the name of its *locale*, which, by the advice of Mr. Colburn, it retains.* I must, however, here declare,

* Having mentioned how this trifling Work came to be written, a word may be said on how it came to be published. While the fourth volume of the "O'Briens" was going through the press, Mr. Colburn was sufficiently pleased with the subscription (as it is called in the trade) to the first edition, to desire a new work from the author. I was just setting off for Ireland, the horses literally putting to—when Mr. Colburn arrived with his flattering proposition. I could not enter into any future engagement; and Mr. C., taking up a scrubby MS. volume, which the servant was about to thrust into the pocket of the carriage, asked "What was that?" I said it was "one of many volumes of odds and ends, *de omnibus rebus*;" and I read him the last entry I had made the night before, on my return from the opera. "This is the very thing," said the Eu-

for the sake of truth, and the benefit of country ladies, that the word *Boudoir* is no longer in vogue in any possible way; that it is a term altogether banished from the nomenclature of fashion; and that I could scarcely have given my work a title less likely to advance its interests with the enlightened of the *bon ton*. This is an important fact, which I have only recently discovered. It is a subject upon which much, no doubt, may be said; but as I am going to France, I will reserve all I have to say till my return, in the conviction that *les lumières du siècle*, on a point so important, will there be afforded me, and every circumstance connected with the "rise, decline, and fall, of the *Boudoir*" will be communicated without reserve or restriction. Till then, and in the glorious hope of returning to my poor, native country, an emancipated Protestant, I take my leave of that gracious public, of whom, whether at home or abroad, I have never had reason to complain, and whose grateful servant I have the honour to subscribe myself.

SYDNEY MORGAN.

*April 4th, 1829,
Kildare-street, Dublin.*

ropean publisher; and if the public is of the same opinion, I shall have nothing to regret in thus coming, though somewhat in *déshabillé*, before its tribunal.

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THE BOOK
OF
THE BOUDOIR.

MY BOOK.

LAST night as we circled round the fire in the little red room in Kildare Street, by courtesy called a boudoir, talking about everything, anything, and nothing at all, I happened to give out some odds and ends, that amused those who, truth to tell, are not among the least amusable; when somebody said, "Why do you not write down all this?" and here is a blank book placed before me for the express purpose. But I suspect there is no talking upon paper, as one talks "*les pieds couchés sur les chenets.*" I feel, at least at this moment, that there is all the difference in the world between sitting bolt upright, before a marble-coloured, blue-lined, blank, leger-looking, Thread-needle-street sort of a volume, for the purpose of opening a running account with one's own current ideas, and the sinking into the downy depths of an easy chair, and "then and there, without let and molestation" (as the old Irish passport has it), giving a careless and unheeded existence to the infinite deal of nothings which lie latent in the memories of all such, as have seen and

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heard much, and have been "over the hills and far away." "Thoughts that breathe," will not always write; "words that burn" are apt to cool down as they are traced; visions that "come like shadows," will also "so depart;" and the brightest exhalations of the mind, which are drawn forth by the sunny influence of social confidence, like other exhalations, will dissipate by their own lightness, and (beyond the reach of fixture or condensation) "make themselves air, into which they vanish."

I never, in my life, kept a commonplace-book for preserving such "Cynthias of the minute." I have even an antipathy to all albums and *vademe-cums*, and such charitable repositories for fugitive thoughts, and thoughtless effusions—reveries which were never *rêvés*—and *impromptus* laboured at leisure. I hardly think I can bring myself to open a regular saving bank for the odd cash of mind, the surplus of round sums placed at legal interest in the great public fund of professed authorship: *on renvoye tout cela à la pédantisme.*"

Still, however, in the days of pure pedantry, the days of the Scaligers, Pasquiers, Balzacs, and Thuanuses, genius and simplicity, and high philosophy too, found frequent shelter in such daily ledgers of spontaneous thought and feeling. "Each day of my life is a page in my book," says the learned Menage, who scribbled his agreeable Ana, while Mesdames Sévigné and Deshoulières sat disputing in the chimney corner on the merits of coffee, and of Racine, or the fashion of a *hurlubrelu*. It was such a book lying temptingly open on the old oak table in the Gothic library of the château Montaigne, that led the charming "*Michel, gentilhomme Périgordin,*" to note down, (in the pauses of more studied composition) those natural and amusing things.

which, as he himself quaintly expresses it, come, "*à saute et à gambade.*"* But then I am not Menage nor Montaigne.

The danger of a book like this, lies in the lure it holds out to egotism. There it is, always ready to receive the perilous confidence of self-love and self-complacency, like an old lady's humble companion, or the confessor of a voluble devotee. "The reason," says the always quotable Madame de Sévigné, "why devotees love their confessors, is the pleasure they have in talking of themselves, even when they have nothing good to tell: '*on aime tant à parler de soi.*'"† Oh, the terrible truth!

There is something too not less dangerous in the waylaying of such a book for every passing impression. What little sensations, which the world should never know, may there find permanency! What opinions may there be recorded, which to broach, were proscription! What honest indignation may there find vent against the falseness of the professed friend, or the vileness of the successful enemy,—feelings which it is vain to express, and undignified to expose. What mere ebullitions of temperament may there assume the shape of habitual sentiment—though even in the writing, they dissipate with the breaking forth of a sunbeam, or lose their acrimony with the shifting of a north-east wind.

Had I not then better cast away this volume, "white and unwritten still," ere it bear evidence against me; and leave to "some hand more calm and sage—the leaves to fill," who haply may make it the nucleus of one of those annuals, never destined to be perennial, or the repertory for some *souvenir*, soon to be forgotten? Such a book may

* "With a skip and a jump."

† "We love so much to talk of ourselves."

have its value. It may preserve a sort of proof-impression of one's self, taken at various sittings, and in various aspects; and thus give one portrait more to the gallery of human originals, to illustrate the great mystery of identity,—that volatile subject, which changes as we analyze it. For even the hand which traced the first line of this farrago, is not the same agent of the same volition, with that which will write the last; though the being in which it resides, is still technically the same. To leave such an auto-transcript behind one, may assist the moral anatomist in his demonstrations, as the bequeathing what is called "our mortal remains" to the dissecting-knife promotes the science of the physiologist. In either case there is much to pity, and much to wonder at; but what is most marvelous and admirable in both, is the inscrutable mystery by which the complicated machinery is set in motion, independently of the subject in which it works; constructed, perfected, moving, stopping!—the power unknown, the end unguessed! At this point, neither books nor bodies can be further of use. The anatomist drops his knife, the moralist his pen. At this point too, I must drop mine: not that I am "weary of conjecture," for I like the animating and enterprising excursion, even when it proves nothing; but,—I must dress for a ball!

Oh! what a refuge is folly against philosophy; what a shield is pleasure against persecution! How many have been burned at the stake, who never would have paid that terrible penalty had they learned to waltz! How many have been broken on the wheel, who would have escaped its tortures, had they been cut short in their unpardonable search after truth, by the necessity of dressing for a ball!

EGOISM AND EGOTISM.

Egoism and egotism—what a difference! The one a vice, the other a weakness of temperament. The one inspires aversion, for it is always unsocial; the other awakens ridicule, for it is frequently absurd. Egoism is in a great degree referrible to modern manners, and it is among the drawbacks on civilization. Egotism is of all ages, and more an affair of structure than of convention. The egotist may be a very vain man, but he may be a gifted, and generally is an amiable one. If he had many serious defects to hide, he would not so frankly give himself up to public inspection. The pains he takes to canvass for public suffrage is a proof that he values opinion; but the worst of it is, that the egotist intrrenches on the self-importance of others—that irremissible sin in society, where every man is his own hero, whatever he may be to his *valet de chambre*.

Egotism, when accompanied by endowments, is infinite in its resources. When it cannot relate, it exhibits; but it must always be before the scene, and occupy the audience. It is seldom found among the heaven-born members of high society; because egoism and not egotism is the inherent, almost organic vice of that class. The egoist is one who, uncalled upon by his necessities for exertions, and led by breeding to resolve all things into self—who, without effort to make, or suffrage to court, feels not the value of public opinion, or, feeling it, believes himself above it. Divested of warm

affections, and independent of all sympathy, he is ever on the side of taste; because no predominant impulse leads him to its violation. He breaks no form of conventional propriety, nor shocks a prejudice of time-honoured ignorance. Devoted to self-gratification, he never seeks it by any greater risk, than comports with his habitual ease and place in society. His gallantry, even when profligate, is passionless and calculating; it is an air, not an enjoyment—an item in its ostentatious externals—an addition to the sum of his superfluous luxuries.

The school of egoists is of recent date. As an affair of temperament, the vice must in all ages have shown itself individually, where it dared; but as a *ton*, as a fashion, the founder of the sect was the Duc de Richelieu. Among the English aristocracy and their humble followers may be found his chief disciples. In France, the revolution "scotch'd the snake," if it did not "kill it." For glory and distinction, the motives of action in the latter generation in France, are too demonstrative, for the self-recoiling *morgue* of concentrated egoism. Napoleon's gallant mareschals were all heroes, and may have been egotists; but egoism belonged not properly to their new blood nor to their arduous habits.*

Although the physiological causes of egoism must exist in all ranks and classes, (for selfishness is pretty generally distributed in all,) yet the egoist *par excellence* must be especially sought among the idlers of fashion, who, if not occupied with themselves, have nothing else to be busied about. Egotists exist more among men of stirring lives, who have been

* Whoever has read the History of the Campaign in Russia, by General Count Ségur, must feel the force of this observation.

forced before the world. Heroes make excellent egotists; they bring their excuse along with them, and render their vanity respectable by the events on which it is founded. It was the egotism of the Moorish "great captain" which won Desdemona, in spite of his dingy hue; and I remember being once a little grazed myself by an *enfilade de batterie* of egotistical heroism, directed against my love of the marvellous, by one of the greatest captains of the present age. *Dio buono!* how I used to open my eyes and "incline my ear," while he, like a chevalier of old, or like "Æneas after supper," related the tale of his own prowess! With what delight, evening after evening, I hung upon his well-recited "feats of broils and battles,—" apart from the egotistical circles, in which the chances of notoriety had associated us, and which (composed of "half the curled darlings of the nation") was as worn out on the subject of my hero and his victories, as on every other; so that I was generally left "sole auditness," while he,

"From year to year,
The battles, seiges, fortunes he had passed,
Ran through."

I remember, one evening, while thus occupied, observing a group of exquisites of both sexes looking slyly at us, and laughing *sous cape*. Though then in my noviciate of fashion, I knew enough of the great world to be aware that a ridicule was worse than a crime; and like all *parvenus*, fearful of incurring the ban of the empire into which I had been admitted, I planted my hero just as he was planting his victorious standard "on the moslem walls." Flying to that great legislature of *ton*, whose word was then the charter of others, as well

as mine, in such affairs, I asked, "What is the matter? What have I done, Lord A——?"

"Nothing, child; only you are a spoony, that's all."

"A spoony! what is a spoony?"

"Something that is easily taken in;—at the gambling table, by a black leg—in society by a bore?"

"But who is a bore?"

"Oh, by Jove! if you have not found out *that*, you must be left to your fate."

"But why is —— a bore?"

"Because all egotists are bores. It is really very amusing to see you, like a little *gobe-mouche*, swallowing with avidity, what has surfeited us all long ago. What a Godsend you must be to him! There is nothing like a fresh importation from Ireland."

I bridled up like a charmer in Richardson's novels, and replied, pertly, "I prefer an egotist with genius, to an egoist without it, at all times."

"That's your affair, dear; but now, at least, you are a purchaser with notice."

"I have not, however, had notice to quit—so I will return to my egotist, and leave you to your egoists;—who has the better bargain?"

"We shall see," said Lord A——, dryly.

He was right. I was obliged to give in, during a fierce combat and a long siege; and so I *struck* long before the enemy hauled down a single colour.

The egotism of Lord Nelson went far beyond that of any of his "great competitors." Not that he talked much of his feats, (for "little would he have graced his tale in speaking of himself;") but he listened with the frankest approbation to the verse or song that celebrated his exploits; assisting at his own apotheosis with as much devotion, as any of the votarists who brought incense to his altar.

There was nothing so characteristic, or amusing, as the scenes in which he and Lady Hamilton exhibited together, adoring and adored; during that short epoch of their fashion, which policy or caprice granted them, in spite of the frailty and the vulgarity of the one, and the very obvious intellectual mediocrity of the other. The stage was generally some saloon of supreme *bon-ton*; the audience, the members of the exclusive circles; and the prima donna, Lady Hamilton, whose ample person seemed to dilate before the piano-forte, while her fine full eyes were turned languidly on the hero of her theme and inspiration, and she sang, at the top of her Poll-of-Plymouth voice, the adulating ode, or the deifying cavatina. Meantime, the conquering hero "leaned over her, enamoured," bearing chorus, beating time, and echoing every pæan, raised to his own glory by London lyrists and Neapolitan laureates.

It was said of Napoleon, "*c'est la moitié d'un grand homme.*"* This is more than can be said of every hero: for some there are, not more than a third part.

There are anecdotes extant of that 'royal' hero, "*Roi, le plus roi, qui onc fut jamais,*" Louis XIV. which afford a precedent, if not an excuse, for the equally ridiculous vanity and egotism of the immortal Lord Nelson. "*Le soir on chanta chez Madame de Maintenon,*" says Dangeau, "*une ode de l'Abbé Genest 'à la louange du Roi,' la musique est de La Lande; et le Roi la trouva si bonne que, quand elle fut finie, il la fit recommencer.*"†

* "That he was but the half of a great man."

† "At night they sung an ode in praise of the king at Madame de Maintenon's. It was by the Abbé Genest, the music by La Lande; and the king found it so excellent, that when it was finished he caused it to be repeated."

Lord Erskine was so noted for talking of himself, that he obtained the *sobriquet* of Counsellor Ego. He could scarcely have chosen a more interesting subject. Actors and actresses are apt to be egotists. They live so much before the public, that they suppose the world to be always engaged with them; and yet live so little in the world, that their sphere of observation is limited to themselves and their profession, and to their successes and their wrongs, before and behind the scenes, *et voilà tout*.

The highest order of egotism, and by far the most delightful and beneficial to society, is autobiography. Where the life, indeed, of the writer is the mere every day personal adventures of pretending mediocrity, it is an impertinent imposition, and meets its just reward in contempt and oblivion. But the egotism of genius, when mingled with great public events, illustrative of peculiar stages in society, is a debt due to posterity, which should be paid: it will not fail to be received with gratitude and delight. Thus have been received the memoirs of all the great men who have written; and of all the agreeable women who have left behind them those charming pictures of society, as well as of themselves, which women only know how to sketch. They are among the great benefactors of humanity; and the gracious sensations they excite, render their works a better course of morals than any prescribed by collegiate discipline, or found in the crude pages of didactic essays. As long as we are occupied and amused, we are seldom vicious; and (to reverse a trite quotation,) "angels are better than men, because they are happier;"—so, down with the Doctors of the Sorbonne; and "one cheer more" for the Doctors De Motteville, La Fayette, De Nemours, De Staël, De Montpensier.

I grieve to be unable to add some fair British writers to this list of sparkling memoirists : but the female authorship of these realms is too serious, perhaps too passionate, for the task. English women can write upon nothing but love and religion ; and therefore they write little besides novels—serious or frivolous, sacred or profane. Wit and philosophy are very sparingly conferred upon them.

The few female autobiographists who have graced the literature of England, were confined to the stirring times of the commonwealth, when the pressure of circumstances, by acting upon the strongest and finest feelings of woman, developed her intellect, and forced her upon active and even perilous existence. The two most brilliant instances of this charming *genre* of egotism are to be found in the memoirs of the fantastic Dutchess of Newcastle, and in those of the heroic Mrs. Hutchinson ;—both admirably illustrious of their respective classes, at the epoch in which they flourished ; the one, of the pure, unmixed aristocracy of England ; the other of its gentry, or highest grade of middle life.

In the long list of biographical egotism, I know but of two persons who have got out of the scrape handsomely ; Cesar, the tactician in taste as in war, with his third person —, and Bonaparte, who talks of his splendid views, and wondrous combinations, in a manner that makes the individuality of the man disappear before his powerful and personified intellect. I allude to the sketches and scraps dictated by him to Las Casas, &c. at St. Helena. His life was a perfect epic—one great dramatic action. What a subject he would have been for Shakspeare ! There is nothing of scenic effect in Richard the Third, or Julius Cesar, finer than the

picturesque situations so carelessly traced by the military pen of Rovigo. For instance—Bonaparte crossing the Red Sea at the head of his legions, precisely where Moses led his Israelites; the peril in which his dauntless daring placed his devoted followers; and his saving them by one of those rapid decisions of mind which characterize the ingenuity, as well as the firmness of genius. In all great exigencies, the man, as well as “the woman, *who deliberates, is lost!*”

Another scene, still more picturesque, occurred the night before the battle of Austerlitz,—the moon shining at its full upon the field, strewn with legions of the brave, who all, save the watch-guards, slept,—how many soon to sleep for ever!—the emperor, in the midst of his army, stretched upon straw, under a rude shed, raised over his head by the tenderness of his soldiers, and sleeping so profoundly that his aid-de-camp was compelled to shake him roughly, when it was necessary that he should be roused to learn some movement of the enemy—his instantly vaulting on his saddled horse—his gallop to the outpost, and perilous survey of the Russian manœuvre—his return to his bivouac—his being recognised by the drowsy troops, whose rest his horse’s tramp had broken,—their cry of *vive l’empereur!*—the lighting of straw torches, a spontaneous honour to their chief, till the whole field blazed—his return to his couch, and to that deep sleep from which he was to awaken to the crowning victory of his great career, that laid the throne of the western Cesars at his feet, and placed the destiny of the emperors of the East in his hands!

One picture more, and I have done. The time, the evening before the battle of Jena, when Napoleon found the artillery, which was to open the

action, blocked up in a rocky ravine, from which it could neither advance nor retreat. His concentrated rage, his terrible silence, unbroken by one reproach of the unskilful commandant—his instant decision, activity, and remedy of the evil. Resuming his first vocation of a working engineer, he hastily gathers the cannoniers round him, distributing to one a torch, to another a pickaxe. Then placing himself at their head, he clears the brambles, cleaves the rocks, and opens a passage for the guns; and when the first carriage has passed, returns again to those obedient slumbers, which, like all else, then awaited on his powerful will. "*J'ai toujours devant les yeux,*" says Rovigo, "*ce qui se paroît sur les figures de ces canoniers, en voyant l'Empereur éclairer lui-même, un falot à la main, les coups redoublés dont il frappoit les rochers.*"*

That the life of such a man should be written from the refuse of the *entresols* of the Tuileries, and the gossip of London drawing-rooms! None but a soldier should write the life of a soldier, if he has not the egotism to write it himself. I am sure the Duke of Wellington is of my opinion; and I hope he will furnish documents to some of his own gallant aids-de-camp and companions, to write his military memoirs, beyond the reach of national prejudices and sordid self-interest, to falsify and to disfigure his deeds and intentions. Let him not trust to the promises of living adulation. Be the fate of his imperial competitor his beacon and guide. As to his legislative memoirs, they are written in two words:—Catholic Emancipation!

* "I have always before my eyes the expression on the countenances of the men, as they looked on the Emperor with a torch in his hand, himself casting a light on the reiterated blows with which he opened the rocks."

LOVE IN IDLENESS.

‘ This Signor Junio’s giant dwarf, Dan Cupid, lord of folded arms.’

How few love-novels are written now! The market is closed, and the commodity out of date. A Scotch gentleman visited us some time back, and amused himself, while the conversation was occupied by a groupe of morning callers, in examining the books in my husband’s study. He had pitched on a shelf of natural history, and his attention dwelt on Lacépède’s voluminous work on fishes. As he ran over the volumes successively, his voice rising in a climax of tone, with his increasing surprise, he exclaimed—“Fesh, fesh, fesh, hey! Sirs, what, sax bukes all on fesh!!!” How many hundred thousand of *bukes* have been written “*all upon love*,” from the lovers of Petrarch, in a thousand and one sonnets, to Mr. Moore’s “*Love of the Angels*,” in one elegant volume! In what various ways too, the subject has been treated, from “*Cassandra*,” and “*Le Grand Cyrus*,” in folio, to the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, in four goodly thick volumes! and so on to *Werter*, in a primer size, which, bound in black velvet, was hung by a gold chain round the neck of its fair readers, before the age of sentiment had passed away! Sooner than write on love, a modern novelist has recourse to the *Newgate Calendar*, and the police reports of the *Morning Herald*.

The fact is, that there is less love in the world than there was; and the stock is daily diminishing. The reason is clear—there is less idleness, and consequently less of the concentration which goes to

make passion. That terrible schoolmaster too, who has, some how or other, got abroad, whips out poor little Love, wherever he finds him,—“a domineering pedant o'er the boy;” and the utilitarians will not hear of the brat, with his anti-Malthusian doctrines, but hunt him from the boudoir to the treadmill, to suffer and repent, with other young offenders. Cultivation, business, and education are “the very beadles to a humorous sigh.”

The idlest nations are ever the most gallant; and Doctors' Commons would have little to do, if the *désœuvrés* of fashion were reduced to assume the moral and physical activity of the *tiers-état*. The semi-civilized great are idle and intemperate; idle, by their institutions, which, being those of despotism, exclude the mass from a participation in national concerns; and intemperate, because wealthy idleness gives the desire and the means of excess. What scenes of wassailing and riot passed among the courtiers of Henry the VIIIth and Francis the Ist; and among those of Charles the IIId, and the early part of the reign of Louis the XIVth. In the highest state of savagery, men are governed by appetite; in the highest degree of civilization they are guided by *convenance*. The Esquimaux, always in the field, and the Englishman, always before the public, and occupied with commerce, politics, science, and the arts, have neither of them leisure to love, after the fashion of the Petrarchs and the Rousseaus.

Even now, however, we may have what the French of our days call “*un sentiment*,” which is a very pretty amusing thing, leaving no scar behind—heart, conscience, and character, all intact, “*pourvu qu'on est sage*” (as a Frenchwoman said to me the other day): an *item* in the code of conduct, by-the-by, never looked for in the days of old French gallantry.

RACONTEURS.*

I AM not aware of any word in the English language that precisely answers to the French "*raconteur*;" and, therefore, I suspect that the gift which it indicates is not in the catalogue of English accomplishments.

The English declaim better than they converse, and argue better than they declaim. Free institutions have favoured their successful cultivation of oratory; habits of public business have made them good logicians: but I doubt that any moral or political combination would have made them good *raconteurs*. The talent is too much an affair of temperament; which institutes and education may direct, but cannot change. It is this that constitutes national character, that renders the modern Frenchman in so many respects what Cæsar found the Gaul; and preserves in the English yeoman of the nineteenth century, much of the moral physiognomy of the rude conquerors at Agincourt, and of the sturdy companions of Wat Tyler. One cannot well conceive a Greenlander being nursed into a Horace, or a negro into a Newton: one might as reasonably speculate on a potato being cultivated into a pine-apple, or a mulberry being grafted to the size and flavour of a melon.

The English temperament is too bilious, reflective, and abstracted, to lend itself to the art of light

* Raconteur—a narrator.

and pleasant narration ; its affections are too deeply seated, its gayety too fitful, its humour too cumbersome ; but with a Frenchman, it is a natural endowment ; and every epoch of the literary history of France can furnish its contingent of good *raconteurs*. In the earlier ages, the gift was turned to a profession ; and its most eminent professors, under the denomination of *Conteurs*, went from province to province, and from château to château, sure of a brilliant reception, and a liberal recompense, in return for the story they ingeniously invented, or the anecdote they pleasantly detailed.

“ Fableaus sont or moult en course,
 Mainte deniers en ont en bourse,
 Cil qui les content.”

Fab. MSS. du Roi.

In modern France, this talent, which always obtained a vogue, occasionally made a fortune. Every *salon* was thrown open to the *raconteur* ; and the reputation commenced at the *petits soupers* and *bouvoirs* of private individuals, received its seal from the admiration of the court and the favour of the monarch. The love of anecdote is a propensity, perhaps a weakness, inherent in royalty : and a Buonaparte and a Bourbon were alike indebted for some of their most agreeable moments to the most charming *raconteur* that perhaps ever France has produced. Both, with royal impatience, were wont to cut a proser short in his tedious tale ; and, the same habit of command dictating to either despot precisely the same phrase, both would exclaim, “ *Allons, Denon, cantez-nous cela !*”

The talent which, by its animation, renders French society so agreeable, has found its way into

French literature. The "*j'ai oui dire*" of Brantôme is always the prelude to some quaint and curious detail; and the delightful Montaigne owes his deathless reputation less to the learning of which he was so proud, than to the art which he himself contemned as *bavardage*. Of the exquisite narrations of Madame de Sévigné it is almost superfluous to speak. Her details are all pictures; and her commonest incidents derive an intense interest from her happy manner of narrating them. What a difference between the love adventures of Madame de Montpensier and the Duc de Lauzun, as told in the ponderous autobiography of the dull and dogged princess, and as sketched in the pages of Madame de Sévigné! The modern dramatist, who has produced the story of Pomenars on the French stage, has added nothing to the dramatic effect of her exquisite narration.

Ninon de l'Enclos possessed the happy talent *de bien raconter*, in such perfection, that when Molière read to her the first draft of his *Tartuffe*, and she related to him an adventure, of which she had been herself the *Elmire*, he declared, that if his piece had not been already written, he would not have undertaken it: so much was her *Tartuffe* superior to his own ("*Tant il se seroit cru incapable de rien mettre sur le théâtre d'aussi parfait, que le Tartuffe de Mademoiselle de l'Enclos.*")

The immediate successor to these gifted women was Mademoiselle de Launay (Madame de Staël). Her narrative of the first interview with her patroness, the Duchesse de Ferté, is a brilliant illustration of the peculiarity of the art: and her well known, "*Allons, Mademoiselle, parlez un peu religion; vous direz en suite autre chose;*"* has passed into a proverb. This fascinating talent is always

notable for the *naïve* simplicity of manner that accompanies it—for that spirited frankness, which affectation (the quality of the false and the feeble) cannot, in all its assumption, accomplish. The gift is rarely and somewhat capriciously dispersed in society. It is sometimes possessed by persons, not otherwise distinguished; and genius, even of the highest order, is often wholly divested of it. I may be wrong; but I doubt if any circumstance could have bestowed it on the late celebrated Madame de Staël. The whole character and bent of her mind seems to have led another way. Her temperament, and the structure of her intellect were too German, too alembicated: while the school of Thomas and of Madame de Necker, in which she was brought up, was too *précieuse* not to have stifled any predisposition she might have possessed, to the natural graces, indispensable to a graphic narrator.

Mounted on the pedestal of her reputation, and twisting between her finger and thumb the laurel branch, which she always wielded (a *tic* or an emblem), Madame de Staël stood, like her own Corinne, in the centre of her circle, as if waiting at once for her audience and her inspiration: and when she was satisfied of the adequate proportion of both, she gave out her metaphysical and political oracles in measured phrases; exhibiting an eloquence, which, whether she explained the doctrines of Kant, or opened the views of Necker, was more calculated to command an admiration, than to excite delight. This was all very fine,—very intellectual; but it was not the thing desired in a good *raconteur*. It is impossible to imagine such a Pythoness stepping

* "Come, Mademoiselle, talk to us a little about religion; and afterward speak on something else."

down from her tripod, huddling herself into her shawl and easy chair, putting her feet on the fender, and carelessly and gayly giving herself up to "*raisonner pantoufle*;" to arrest and charm the attention by that "sweet and voluble discourse," which pauses not to choose a theme, nor studies the art, by which it unconsciously fascinates the hearer.

It was the want, perhaps, of this happy simplicity, that lost Madame de Staël the suffrage of one, whose conquest was the sum of all her ambition. Willing to be won, Buonaparte refused to be lectured: and flying from the eloquent dictations of the daughter, as he had cut short the tedious dissertations of the father, he denominated the one a *phraseuse*,* and pronounced the other "*au-dessous de sa célébrité*."†

It was, I believe, much about the time when he thus fled from the disserting financier, whose lengthiness, like his politics, were ill adapted to the rapid "*en avant*" of modern military and legislative manœuvres, that Buonaparte gave a willing audience to a pleasant *raconteur*, whom chance threw in his way, in the person of an humble minister of the Genevese church. Napoleon, with his unerring tact, soon detected the talent which was latent beneath the unpretending simplicity of his chance companion. The conversation turned upon Kant and his philosophy. "Can you understand it?" asked the Emperor, in his *brusque* way. "Not a word, Sire," replied the Cure. "Nor I neither," rejoined Napoleon; "but Madame de Staël understands it

* "A maker of phrases."

† "Beneath his reputation." This occurred in his interview with M. Necker, at Geneva.

all; (*Ni moi non plus ; cependant Madame de Staël entend tout cela ;**) and he laughed, and showed his handsome teeth, delighted to find one clever man, at least, as dull as himself upon that vague and unsatisfactory doctrine.

To relate well, requires a minute and clear perception of particulars ; which, being strongly impressed on the mind, will be returned with all the truth, force, and illuminated effect, necessary to impress the auditor. Facts often appear too highly coloured, when they are but given in the same deep tone in which they were witnessed. Some minds receive their impressions of scenery, character, and incident, as an iron target receives the point of an arrow, which scarcely leaves a trace behind it ; while others of more penetrable stuff, take the form of their objects with a depth and sharpness, fully proportionate to the force that stamps it. Between these two classes of intellects there is little sympathy ; and the possessor of the first will consider as exaggerations of truth and nature, the narrative which reflects the ideas of the latter in the full vigour of their original conception.

Denon often told me that the best *raconteur* he ever knew, except Voltaire, was Voltaire's disciple, the Marquis de Vilette, the husband of *Belle et Bonne*. Ferney was a good school. Every one knows the anecdote of D'Alembert, Huber, and others, telling stories of robbers *à qui mieux mieux*, and Voltaire, when called upon, beginning, in the tone of a gossiping old woman—" *Messieurs, il y avait une fois un fermier-général—Ma foi j'ai oublié le reste !*"* Denon told me his last visit to Voltaire was in 1776. He had been detained late at Geneva,

* " Gentlemen, there was once upon a time a fermier-général — I have forgotten the rest."

and it was near midnight when he arrived at Ferney. He found the venerable patriarch sitting up to receive him, in that *salon* now so familiar to every English traveller. He was in high health and spirits; and after supper the two delightful *raconteurs* began to narrate—mutually excited, and mutually charmed. It was in vain that Madame Denis frequently came from her bed-room, in night-cap and slippers, to endeavour to get her uncle to bed. Voltaire, with the querulousness of a spoiled school-boy, resisting the similar attempt on the part of his nurse, pushed her away, with—“*Mais allez donc—qu'est-ce que ça fait, si je m'amuse ?*”*

The influence which Denon himself obtained over time, and even sometimes over nature (for “he could murder sleep,” by the exercise of this amusing gift), was often exemplified upon ourselves, during our various residences at Paris. Denon kept intolerably late hours—we intolerably early ones. After a month of *bals-parés—soirées—réunions—*and *opéras*, we were obliged to give in, and to stay one night at home; and so issued orders accordingly, and sent the servants to bed.—When, lo! as the last lamp was put out, the last ember fading, and we were yawning our way to our bed-room, across the gloomy antichamber of our old hotel in the Fauxbourg St. Germain, a loud ring was heard, the great gate invisibly opening, creaked slowly on its hinges, and the wheels of a cabriolet came rattling over the paved court. Back we ran—lest our chamber lights should shine forth from the windows, and bring up the unseasonable intruder—while *Pierre* the *frotteur*, putting in his melo-drama head, asked, interrogatively, “*Madame n'y est pas—n'est-ce pas ?*” and

* “There, there—go away—what does it signify, if I am amused?”

then flew to forbid the nocturnal visiter. But it was in vain: he was already in the anti-room—and we heard the voice of Denon, saying, “Go to bed, my good fellow—there, that will do;”—and in he came on the very tip-toe of excitation, humming “*On revient toujours*,” with applicable emphasis. He was all star, ribbon, and the legion of honour; in full dress, both in spirits and person. He had dined with one of the ministers; and had not yet got rid of the fervour of an agreeable party, where he had justified the partiality of Buonaparte, by charming even the ultras themselves.

He came to bestow all his brilliancy upon us, as he was wont to do on similar occasions; and we were as much bored at the delightful visit, as if it had been all the tediousness of those who know so well how to be tedious: so there we stood, yawning and smiling, with a sort of galvanic contortion, at once to show our courtesy and drowsiness, with each a chamber candlestick in hand, and reiterating “But we were going to bed, my dear Denon.”—“I see it,” said Denon, and gently taking my candle, he lighted the *bougies* on the table—drew a chair for me near the fire—threw a log on the hearth, and, with a petitioning air, solicited “*encore un petit moment*.” “Our husband and ourself” exchanged looks of mutual annoyance, and yawned ostentatiously our unwilling assent; wondering at the influence of the miserable *physique*, or that any state of exhaustion could reduce us to so low an ebb, as not to relish the society of one we loved so well and admired so much.

Denon had that day made me a present of his superb work on Egypt (the large edition), and the enormous volume lay upon the ponderous marble table, in the centre of the room, which seemed by its strength to have been built on purpose to receive

it. We had been looking over the plates, and Denon took out his pencil and wrote the names of some of the eminent persons whose portraits they contain. Then drawing close to the fire, he put on his *raconteur's* face, and gave us such curious and animated details of his sojourn in Egypt with Buonaparte—of his intimacy with Dessaix, and with others of the *notables* of the expedition, together with the various scenes and circumstances incidental to the enterprise,—that insensibly we became as animated in our questions as he was in his narration.

From Egypt we got to the funeral of Dessaix on Mount St. Bernard, (a picture worthy of Poussin), and thence to the German camp-pigs. He described the entrance into Potsdam, etched to the life, like a proof copy of one of his own engravings from Rembrandt or Paul Potter; not a light, not a shade was wanting! and the tones and gestures of the conqueror were given, as if he lived and moved before us. Their visit to Sans Souci, and the flattering interest with which Buonaparte inspected the apartments, where nothing had been changed since their occupation by Frederick the Great, were not left to mere narrative; they were acted to the life: and the plunder of the *armoires* and *secrétaires*, were represented in a most robber-like manner. The emperor had the sword of Frederick for his share of the spoils; Denon's booty was equally characteristic—a MS. *brouillon* of the king's poetry, in his royal autograph, with Voltaire's corrections. Under some of the stanzas was written "*digne des meilleurs poëtes Français*;"* and under others the simple corrective criticism of "*fié donc!*" This was what Voltaire called "washing the king's linen."

The sympathy of Napoleon for his wounded sol-

* "Worthy of the best poets of France."

iers, and his personal attention to them, have been often recorded. His anxious visits to the field of battle after the contest was decided—his feeling the pulse and wiping the wounds—his administering cordials with his own hands—are facts well known, which won him the love of his army, no less than his prowess. Denon had been with him in one of these pious visitations, and he was so affected by the dreadful spectacle, that it became the nightmare of his dream. He arose with the dawn and returned to the field, in the hope of rescuing some still living beings from the heaps of dead that strewed it. In the features of an officer, he thought he recognised a friend, and, on examining more minutely, he perceived some tokens of lingering vitality. He endeavoured to extricate the body from the dead horse under which it lay; but his strength failed him. There was not a moment to be lost—looking round him for assistance, he observed two men taking their station on an overthrown piece of artillery, coolly surveying the scene, and writing in their tablets. They were easily recognised as the German commissaries of interment. He flew to solicit their assistance; but both replied in unison, "*Monsir. nous sommes ici pour enterrer les morts.*" "Bon," said Denon, "but you will surely assist me in saving the living?" Without pausing in their melancholy task, they again replied, "*Nous sommes ici uniquement pour enterrer les morts.*" Denon in vain had recourse to persuasion, to bribes, to threats; nothing moved the phlegm of the Germans: they heard him out patiently, and repeated, for the third time,—"*Fous êtes ein bon Monsir, mais nous sommes ici pour enterrer les morts.*"* This writes flatly; but

* "You are a good gentleman, but our business here is to bury the dead."

when told most dramatically, with the impassibility of the German physiognomy, and the guttural German accentuation, it was irresistible; and thus our delightful *raconteur* went on "from grave to gay," with equal pathos and humour, making us laugh and cry, and winding us up and down at pleasure.

In the midst of a most interesting adventure—the scene Venice, the time a moonlight evening, the place a balcony in the palace Benzoni, and the heroine the beautiful and well known "Biondina in Gondoletta,"—he paused abruptly, with a hushing movement of his finger, marking emphatically the deep swing of the clock in the Tuileries striking three. He arose all confusion and apologies, for having led us into such unseasonable vigils, and was hurrying off, when I detained him with, "but finish your story." "*Trois heures bien sonnés,*"* replied Denon, already at the door; while I answered in the words of Voltaire, "*Mais qu'est-ce que ça fait, si je m'amuse?*" "*A la bonne heure,*" said Denon, triumphantly, "I saw on entering that I was a bore; † that you had taken your determination, and I took mine; so good morning—I'll finish my story another time:" and with this trick of the tale-teller of the Arabian Nights, he tripped off as *leste* at seventy as at seventeen—sprang into his cabriolet, and rattled out, as he had rattled in, his horse and driver as much on the alert as himself. The whole thing was French, exclusively French—the *raconteur*, horse, driver, and cabriolet included.

The Italians have never been celebrated as *raconteurs*; the organization, which gives them their *improvisatori*, is perhaps in precise opposition to the necessary qualifications of a *raconteur*. The sure,

* "It has struck three."

Un fâcheux

rapid, deep, but careless touching-off, which gives colloquial narration its charm and spirit, the imitative humour, inevitable mimicry, appropriate gesticulations, changeful accent, and vivid conception of the fact or scene related, require quite another sort of *physique* from that which forms the slow, solemn declaimer, and oracular *improvisatore*—who looks all in the clouds, warming his fancy with unearthly fires, and arranging his ready-made phrases and conventional rhymes, with eyes up-raised, and glance of fanciful abstraction—apart, and beyond all the graphic realities of life. Even in conversation, the Italians are more impressive than agreeable—more passionate than witty;—they talk in sentences *à longue haleine*, and forget that the world was made in six days—the first and greatest lesson given by Providence on the value of time, even within view of eternity!

The Italians complain of the disproportionate number of *seccatori* (*Anglice*, bores) which creep into their circles, without accounting for the circumstance. But men who, by their religion and institutions, are forbidden to think freely, or to discuss those great questions which concern the main facts of life, must be tied down to matters of minor importance. They are impelled to substitute words for deeds, and are rendered feeble in their intellectual intercourse, because they are false in their political position. Still “their stars are more in fault than they.” Boccaccio was no bad *raconteur*; Ariosto knew how to relate; and from the *novellisti* of the free states of Italy in her glorious middle ages, Chaucer and Shakspeare borrowed their most humorous details. Strong and stirring combinations will always produce striking and graphic delineations.

But of all the *raconteurs* in the world, (the French

excepted)—they, whose own story is so lamentable to relate, and so piteous to hear,—the poor Irish are the most humorous and amusing. So many causes, physical and political, have conspired to form and finish this talent in the Irish, that it would be irrelevant to the lightness of the present theme to enter on them. It is a curious fact, that Ireland, like France, had her *conteurs*, from the earliest periods; who, by the significant name of *Dres-beartagh** (story-tellers), made a part of the establishment of great families down to the latter end of the 16th century. "The great men of their septs," says Sir W. Temple, "among the many offices of their establishment, which continued always in the same family, had not only a physician and a poet, but a tale-teller. A very gallant gentleman of the north has told me, of his own experience, that in his wolf-huntings there, when he used to be in the mountains three or four days together, and lay very ill at nights, so that he could not well sleep, they would bring him one of these story-tellers, who, when he lay down, would begin a tale of a king, or a giant, or a dwarf and a damsel, and such rambling stuff; and continue it, all night long, in such an even tone, that one heard it going on whenever one awaked."

This is not precisely the effect that a modern *raconteur* would like to produce. But the talent, the gift, was there; and the whole scene connected with it, the wolf-hunter, the mountains, and the story-teller, are all curious and picturesque, and not a little illustrative of the wild and primitive state of Ireland, even down to the times of Sir William Temple, the patron and master of Swift.

One of the last Irish *conteurs* by profession was

* *Dres* means, literally, "news."

still living about thirty years ago, in the county of Galway, and the fame of Cormac Common, the *Fin-sgealaithe* or *Dres-beartagh*, the "man of talk," has not yet passed away in that province, which is still the repertory of all that is most national in Ireland. Blind, poor, but gifted, Cormac early adopted a profession consonant to his position and his endowments. The tale he narrated, and the genealogical illustrations which he picked up in his wanderings, and which he eloquently adorned, were his passports alike to the mansions of the great, and to the cabin of the lonely,—his letter of credit on the festivities of the wake, and his billet on the hospitality of the fair. He was a poet also, no less than a story-teller; and we owe to him the oft-told and beautiful tale of *Ellen na Roon*, which he threw into verse, and adapted to an air of his own composition. More than one Italian Syren has owed the enthusiastic raptures she has inspired in an Irish audience, to the notes of poor Cormac.

I remember telling Madame Catalani, when she was paying me a morning visit in Dublin, that I did not like the manner in which she had the night before jerked out the last notes in "Johnny Adair;"—that the air was not Scotch, but Irish (of which its smooth, flowing melody, in regular progression, so characteristic of Irish music, was a proof). We went to the piano-forte; and I gave our Irish way of singing the passage. Madame Catalani tried it—liked it, but doubted that the air was Irish. To satisfy her doubts, I gave her its history, with the birth, parentage, and education of Cormac, its composer; and a sketch of the story of its subject, pretty *Ellen Kavanagh*, into the bargain. Her charming *naïveté* was instantly under arms; she would have the story in French; and when I had done it, I was

quite surprised to find how well the loves and sorrows of Caroll O'Daly and Ellen O'Kavenah, with all the Irish idioms, and grating gutturals, could be translated into the precise phrases of "*Messieurs les quarante*." True passion is translatable into all languages; with conventional feelings it is quite the reverse.

Cormac Common told his stories in prose. His verses he recited to a sweet, wild recitative, whose modulations are said to have been diversified by cadences of peculiar beauty.

"In rehearsing any of Oisín (or Ossian), or any composition in verse," says one of the most accomplished of his surviving auditors, Sir William Ouseley, "he chants them pretty much in the same manner as our cathedral service."

The national endowment, which once gave a rank, still exists in Ireland in an eminent degree; though no longer, as of old, bestowing an hereditary *grade*. It is chiefly confined, however, to the "mere Irish," whose temperament lends itself to receive impressions with force, and to give them out with felicity. While the mixed race of Cromwellian colonists and Scotch undertakers preserves the even tenor of its way, "sober, stedfast, and demure," and takes the route which in Ireland "leads on to fortune,"—the more sensitive descendant of the aborigines—alive to every external form, and colouring every fact with the glowing medium of his mind—led more by fancy than by interest, and satisfied with the social apotheosis produced by social endowments,—lives too often for the amusement of others, rather than for his own advancement. Who that remembers Edward Lysaght will not apply to him this assertion, so applicable to his genius and to his fate?

It is certainly among the most Irish members of

Irish society, that the best *raconteurs* are still to be found ; and it is among the many privations inflicted upon those English officials, who are sent to administer our proconsular government, that they have been restricted to the same dull round of office society, as had stupified their predecessors,—a society into which the wit and humour of the natives are so rarely permitted to penetrate. What yawnings might have been spared to bored viceroys, and to listless secretaries, had they been allowed to throw open their *salons* to that humour and colloquial vivacity, so long proscribed by the ascendancy ! However powerful at the bar, and eloquent in the senate, Irish intellect may appear, it is only under the influence of social feelings that Irish spirit kindles into its brightest lights. It is in the collision of social contact that it strikes out its most sparkling emanations. In the sanctuary of private intercourse, its reckless confidence and careless gayety suspect no treachery and know no restraint. Even penal laws are forgotten, under the sacred protection of the law of hospitality ; and those, disqualified by religion for the dull routine of office, prove their claims by nature to the highest ranks in the great commonwealth of wit.

Whoever has read those delightful Irish articles, which give such *éclat* to the most fashionable and popular of British periodicals,—whoever has laughed or wept over those pages of mingled pathos and humour, its Irish sketches,—or has chatted with Canova and Cammucini on the arts of Rome, in the same miscellany, would find those delineations cold and feeble, could he witness the superior animation, with which I heard them given, *vivâ voce*, at our own round table of ten. There, the narrators added to the raciness of Irish humour, the high finish of dramatic

mobility, the tone, the look, the accent, which constitute the merit of a well-told tale, but which will not print. To judge of this natural gift in all its fecility, it were well to become the auditor of one, whom it is a boast to know,*—who, whether he tells his humorous Irish story round the festive board of his own paternal mansion in Kildare, or in his pretty hotel in the *Chaussée d'Antin*, relates his anecdote in French, rivalling the *purisme* of *Madame de Genlis*, to the delight of listening academicians, and the envy of professed *beaux esprits*, still most happily illustrates that description of a *raconteur*, which he who has left no subject untouched, and was himself the best of story-tellers, has bequeathed to posterity:—

“ A merrier man,
 Within the limit of becoming mirth,
 I never spent an hour's talk withal.
 His eye begets occasion for his wit,
 For every object that the one doth catch
 The other turns to a mirth-moving jest ;
 Which his fair tongue (conceit's expositor)
 Delivers in such apt and gracious words,
 That aged ears play truant to his tales,
 And younger hearings are quite ravished ;
 So sweet and voluble is his discourse.”

* P. L——n, Esq. of M——, in the county of Kildare.

ETERNITY.

A COLLECTION of the opinions and desires of individuals, respecting eternity, would afford good food for meditation. The desire for existence beyond the grave is an almost inevitable consequence of the organic desire to live in the flesh; yet few would relish an eternity of the life they now lead, or even consent to retrace the past. Horne Tooke was among these few, and was so satisfied with his mortal career, as to wish its repetition in a perpetually recurring series. One day at dinner, he said, "A little Brentford election—a little trial for high treason (though, on another occasion, he said he would plead guilty, rather than undergo a second speech from the Attorney General)—a little contest with Junius—a little every thing, down to the hare upon the table."

This, however, was the sentiment of a man refreshed by good cheer, and enlivened by good wine; and the philosophy of the dinner-table is always suspicious. One must appeal from "Philip drunk to Philip sober," to come at the real opinion of the individual.

"L'esprit que tient du corps,
En bien mangeant, remonte ses ressorts;"

but the tones of an overstrained instrument are always false; and the proverb of "truth in wine" fails in its application to the instance in question. To judge with *sans froid* of existence, the party must be neither full nor fasting.

HORNE TOOKE.

HORNE TOOKE used to tell a Juvenile story to his husband, (who in his boyhood occasionally partook of the 'Diversions of Purley,') very illustrative of the narrator. Horne, when at Eton, was one day asked by the master why a certain verb governed a particular case? he answered, "I don't know." "That is impossible!" said the master. "I know you are not ignorant, but obstinate." Horne, however, persisted, and the master flogged. After punishment the pedagogue quoted the rule of grammar which bore on the subject, and Horne instantly replied, "I know that very well; but you did not ask for the rule, you demanded the reason." Here we behold the perspicuity of the mature dialectician, and the dogged obstinacy which would not yield a step to authority, and could purchase a victory at any price of suffering. Opinions may change, but man, in his leading characteristics, is at fifty what he is at fifteen.

 RICHARD KIRWAN, Esq.

THERE is scarcely a Catholic family of gentility in Ireland, whose story, if impartially told, would illustrate the misrule by which the prosperity of the country has been overthrown, and its genius n

fed. From the beginning to the end of the last century, to have been born a Catholic was a stigma, which no talent could efface, no patriotism remove. To exhibit either, was at one period to ensure proscription, or at least persecution: and the market opened for Irish abilities abroad, was so much more profitable, honourable, and secure, that few of the condemned faith remained in their native country, whose endowments exceeded the quality demanded for home consumption.

While all Europe applauded the genius and hailed the scientific researches of Richard Kirwan, (one of the most distinguished chemists and philosophers of his time,) he was utterly unappreciated, and all but unknown in his native land; and, but for an accident, he probably would never have returned to the country, from which his religion had banished him, to give to it the benefits of his knowledge and the glory of his name.

Richard Kirwan, of Cregg Castle, in the county of Galway, was the descendant of one of the most ancient and respectable families of Connaught,* a province in which few families condescended to date from a more modern epoch, than the flood. He was born in the year 1734, a fearful time in Ireland. Being a younger son, he was (like all the *cadets* of his rank and class) sent to a foreign country to receive the benefit of a liberal education; and he passed his boyhood and early youth at the Seminary of St. Omer, where, having completed his classical studies, he gave himself up to natural science and philosophical pursuits, with such enthusiasm and such brilliant success, as declared a higher vocation.

* The Kirwans are the only aboriginal family who were admitted into the Thirteen Tribes of Galway.—“As proud as a Kirwan,” is a Galway proverb.

than he would have been permitted to follow in his own country. The death of his elder brother, by calling him to the succession of a noble estate, enabled him to follow with more effect the bent of his intellect; and he continued to cultivate science with that persevering diligence, and eager love of truth, which are ever the test of the highest order of genius. As a chemist, for many years he stood alone; and if, afterward, he was outstripped in the career of improvement, by more youthful successors, he still led the way to some of their most important discoveries. Living much abroad, where he was most known and esteemed, he was elected a member of the academies of Stockholm, Berlin, Upsal, Jena, and Philadelphia; as he was, afterward, Fellow of the Royal Societies of London and Edinburgh. It was not, I believe, till long after these foreign honours were showered upon him, that he was elected President of the Royal Irish Academy, and created a Doctor of Laws in the Irish University. His unrivalled mineralogical attainments pointed him out also to the government, as the fittest person to hold the office of Inspector General of his Majesty's mines in Ireland.

From that period, he resided chiefly in his native country—sometimes at his mansion in Rutland-square, and occasionally, as long as his health permitted, at his patrimonial castle of Cregg. The victim of a singular affection of the throat, which prevented him from eating in company, Mr. Kirwan retired from what is called “the world;” and, much more celebrated than known, he lived only with the literary, the liberal, and the scientific (in Ireland, a very select and circumscribed circle); but he kept up a correspondence with all that was most distinguished in Europe. Of his numerous

works, those most known are his "Elements of Mineralogy;" "Geological Essays;" "Analysis of Mineral Waters;" "Logic, or an Essay on the Elements, Principles, and Different Modes of Reasoning;" "Metaphysical Essays;" "Essay on Phlogiston;" and his work on the "Temperature of Different Latitudes," which was, I believe, his last.

I remember, when I was a child (*du temps du bon Roi Dagobert*), hearing a great deal of Mr. Kirwan and of chemistry: not that my family were particularly given to that, or any other of the sciences, (good folks!) though we had all a great calling to the arts. But the most eminent chemist of the day was an Irishman—and, still more, a Connaught man—and, more still, a Galway man—and, beyond all this, we were kin to the whole Thirteen Tribes of Galway, of which the Kirwans were one; "aye, in truth, dear, from Maoldal-hreock down," as my father used to say: for upon such Irish lore I was fed from the cradle. Thus the name of Kirwan got associated in my infant mind, with that of Shakspeare, Handal, and Carolan the Irish bard; the three *Dii majorum Gentium* of our household altars.

My father (as fine and genuine a specimen of the true Irish soil, as the Irish wolf-dog) discovered in me an apt predisposition for all that was Irish—for its music, its poetry, its wild and imaginative fables, and local gossip: and "the genius of my country found me," as the immortal Robert Burns said, not indeed "at the plough," but on my father's knee, listening, with open mouth, upraised eyes, and tremulous attention, to that species of "rambling stuff," called in the language of the land, so early my inspiration and my theme, *Shanaos*.

It was in enumerating the glories of his native
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province, the worthies it had produced, and the antiquity and respectability of its Thirteen Tribes, that my father was wont particularly to dilate on the illustration thrown on the family of the Kirwans by some of its living members: and having sketched off the genealogical distinction of the Forts, or Fuentes, the Joyces, the Trenches, the Blakes, and Bodkins (or the "*Buaidh Baudikin*," as he called them), he always paused in long digression on the family of the Kirwans—or, as he pronounced it, the O'quirwans, "for, my dear, the Kirwans, I am sorry to say, dropped *the vowel* in the troubles; like many others, who dared not exhibit the O or the Mac;—(which was our own case, God help us!) and the Macowens, *Anglice* Owensons, and the O'quirwans, or *O'Kirwans*, remained stripped of those family patronymics to this day. But they are, ever were, and will be, a great family. It was one of the Kirwans of Castle Hacket who first introduced glass-windows into county Galway; and I have heard tell that the first teapot seen in the province, was in the buffet of the Kirwans of Blindacre. But the Castle Hackets have to boast of producing that inspired preacher, Doctor Kirwan—the greatest pulpit orator, as Father O'Leary assured me, since the time of Bossuet. Then there are the Kirwans of Cregg, their chief, at this day, being the greatest chemist and philosopher in Europe. I remember well, when Richard Kirwan first returned from abroad to Cregg Castle, seeing him walk of a Sunday to the Mass House, on the road-side, in a rich suite of embroidered clothes; his *chapeau-bras* under his arm, and picking his steps along the dirty road, with brilliant stone buckles in his shoes. He was a tall, elegant, comely young man then, and spoke good Irish, though somewhat too fond of interlarding his dis-

course with foreign phrases. He was then, what is called in Irish a "*chi shin*,"* and we little thought he would have turned out the greatest philosopher and chemist of his age." This was an image; the true source of deep and indelible impressions: and there it is, fresh as I received it—a proof copy, not a line worn out.

It was probably this graphic sketch, and the ideas, associated with it, of the value of philosophy and the importance of chemistry, which, at a very early period of my life, influenced my pursuits. For before I was fourteen I had read Locke (which chance threw in my way in a parlour window) with infinite delight; and I imbibed a very ardent, but very short-lived passion for chemistry, not a little seduced by hearing a great deal of the charms of Pauline Lavoisier, and reading some of her experiments. My experiments, however, were cut short by my burning my fingers severely with phosphorus, while fired by the ambition of frightening my maid, by writing flaming letters on the walls of her bedroom in a dark night. The danger I incurred of being burned to death, and the fright my unlucky experiment caused to my family, checked my "vaulting ambition;" and thus my love of philosophy fell a victim to my love of fun. From that moment—

"Fair Science, to you
I then bid a long and careless adieu,"

The restless vivacity of intellectual youth, feeling its way to truth, and impelled, by its own energies, to experiments upon all sorts of knowledge, is frequently mistaken for a decided vocation to some one

* A person of remarkable appearance.

subject, for which the student has neither will nor organization. Nature, however, left free to act, soon finds her own level, and discovers her own bent. It is the folly of parents to force or restrain her. She may be assisted—she cannot be reorganized: and though it may be easier to inculcate science, than to inspire a talent for the arts, yet mediocrity in both must be the consequence of those forced marches of mind, which enfeeble the victim, without attaining the end.

But though I gave up chemistry, I had not forgotten the chemist; and I borrowed and read the works of Richard Kirwan—at least, as much of them as I could understand; and perhaps a little more—for I dipped into his Elements of Mineralogy, worked hard at his Essays, and picked up just enough of his favourite doctrine of phlogiston, to astonish the vulgar and amuse the wise;—among whom I reckoned my governess, and my writing-master. Truth, however, to tell, my ideas of the profound and celebrated philosopher still remained mixed up and associated with my father's description of the tall, comely, elegant young man, picking his steps through the mud of Connaught roads, with diamond buckles in his shoes, and an opera hat under his arm.

In process of time, when school was up, and “Alley Croaker made a mighty noise”—when one “wild Irish girl” brought the other into notice—it became the fashion to ask that other and her Irish harp to Dublin parties. This (*par parenthèse*,) not because she wrote novels, and was an honest, pains-taking little person, leaving no calling for the idle trade, and turning to account the *petit bout de talent*, given her, by Him from whom all is derived, to lighten the burden which misfortune had heaped on her family; but because she was the *enfant gâté* of a par-

ticular circle, and lived with the Lady Harringtons, Asgills, and all sorts of great official English ladies. As for the Irish Protestant Ascendancy dames, the Mrs. Chief Baron this, and Mrs. Chief Justice that, Mrs. Commissioner of wide streets, and Mrs. Secretary of the paving board, she might have perished in the streets, in want or infamy, before one of their ascendancyships would have stretched forth a finger to save her from either. But "let that pass," as the Scotch novels say.

It happened, that shortly after the publication of the *Wild Irish Girl*, as I sat making up one of those "tissues of woven air," in which I then clothed my heroines, and in which I intended to dress myself for a ball at the Barracks, given that night by Lady Augusta Leith,—a plain, dark, old-fashioned chariot drove to the door, and up came a card, thus inscribed—"Mr. Kirwan, to pay his respects to the fair authoress of the *Wild Irish Girl*."—My stars! what a fuss! The Great Richard Kirwan, the philosopher! the chemist! the comely! the elegant! the celebrated! What stowing away of breadths and gores (we had not come to *ruches* and *falbalas*)—what pushing of work-baskets under the sofa, and ramming the Sorrows of Werter into the bread basket!—for work, Werter, and bread and butter were then all in equal requisition.

I flew first to the harp, to get up an attitude (like poor Mathurin), and then back to the table to seize my pen like "Anna Matilda;" and when the door opened, I was placed in a thoughtful position, with the contemplative look of a doctor of the Sorbonne, or of Lydia Languish; but the apparition, which for a moment halted at the threshold, and then moved on in solemn gait, actually made me start. A tall, gaunt figure, wrapped from neck to heel in a dark ro-

quelaure, with a large-leafed hat flapped low over the face, presented the very picture of Guy Faux, with nothing wanting but his dark lantern. The comely, the elegant young man disappeared from my imagination; and the venerable, but very singular-looking philosopher, "stood confessed."

Mr. Kirwan, with all the grace of the old school, moved his hat, and instantly replacing it on a full, old-fashioned peruke, pleaded the necessity for covering his head, on account of some disorder, which rendered it dangerous to do otherwise, even in a warm room. After a few hems and haws on my part, and a fixed stare on his, we fell to discourse, and the conversation soon became animated, and to me highly interesting. It arose from his taking up a book that lay on the table, and had replaced my Werter. This was unlucky; he threw down the book with indignation, and cautioned me against what he called its "selfish sophistry," adding, "young lady, you have too much imagination and too much feeling, to give up your precious time to such works as this;" and he then attacked the doctrines of Helvetius, with more feeling than logic. His own philosophy being founded in his quick and almost morbid sensibility, he would not allow self-love to be the *primum mobile* of all human action. Sympathy was his leading dogma; and the predominancy of good his creed.

While we were talking, I perceived, from the window near which we were seated, the wretched skeleton of a scarcely living horse, which had been turned out to die on a piece of waste ground, not yet built on. The bones had nearly pierced the skin, and it fell as we looked on it, and died. "So much for the prevalence of good," I said. "What must have been the sufferings of that poor animal.

since it first began to fail in strength and utility, and was exposed to the brutality, ignorance, and disappointed avarice of its owner, who has thus turned it forth to die in agony and in want! Yet what had that poor beast done to merit such a fate? For him no future compensation exists—no bright hereafter repays, to all eternity, his sufferings on earth. But such is the lot of nearly the whole brute creation; to serve and suffer,—to be incapable of crime, and yet to feel its direst penalties.”

The countenance of Mr. Kirwan became gloomy and agitated; he turned away from the window, and, seating himself by the fire, after a long silence, he addressed me, in a solemn and impressive manner, that affected me deeply, and left its influence fixed on my mind. He began by observing, that the apparent sufferings of the animal who had died under our eyes, had for a moment elicited the most painful and piteous sympathy; that the idea of sufferings imposed without a cause on the part of the sufferer, and which were to have no retribution, no recompense, was too painful an idea to indulge in, and too derogatory to the wisdom and goodness of the Supreme Being, to be credible; that he had therefore long been convinced, that those signs of suffering manifested by brute animals, were but means to cherish and promote the sympathies of men and to check his natural tendency to tyrannize and misuse power, whenever it was granted him. In a word, that he was a sincere disciple and zealous advocate for the doctrine of Gomez Pereira, (which was popularized by Descartes,) who conceived that all appearances of sensibility manifested by animals are fallacious; and that the brute species are mere machines, divested of all feelings.

There is something so amiable in this horror of

injustice, that it is impossible not to pardon the inconsequence of the reasoning. In what is the generally received notion of retributive vengeance, which gratuitously inflicts pain, where neither amendment nor example can be hoped, more consistent with the idea of infinite goodness, than that of the temporal miseries of unoffending brutes? The difficulties surrounding the admitted existence of evil in its simple relation to man, one would think were sufficient, without bringing the brute race into question. It is curious to remark, that the argument for the possible automatic nature of the brute mechanism, is precisely that of the materialist against the existence of the soul; all which is very good as it respects the animal, but, applied to man, is "stark naught;"—a good specimen of the fairness of theologians, which almost drives one on the mythology of Pope's Indian, and makes one wish to take our dog along with us into the regions of immortality.

Father Bougeant, a jesuit, and too much of a jesuit not to see the difficulties of either system, cut the Gordian knot, by stating that brutes were animated by the souls of devils; and one might sometimes be tempted to think so, when a horse will gib, and a "pig wont go to market"—when an ass proves as obdurate as Balaam's, without the same cause—and a crocodile "puts its hand into its breeches pocket and sheds feigned tears," the manner of Sir Boyle's illustration.

Speaking of an objection that lies against this opinion, drawn from the pleasure men take in the society of animals, the jesuit says, "If I am told that these poor devils are doomed to suffer eternal torments, I admire God's decrees, but I have no share in that dreadful sentence. I leave the execution of it to the sovereign Judge; and I live with

my little devils, as I do with a multitude of people, of whom religion tells me that a great number must be lost." In this good-natured feeling, Bougeant is not singular. Most people have a lurking notion, that they themselves will escape reprobation; and as for their relations and friends, if they will try their chance of going "the other way, the other way," as Mr. Moore delicately phrases it, why then, *saute qui peut*.

In the charitable creed of Mr. Kirwan, I have often been tempted to put faith—after the fashion of St. Augustine, even though it were impossible—when I have seen the dreadful sufferings inflicted on domestic animals (and in Ireland they are worse treated than in any other part of the world, in spite of our dear Dick Martin). On such occasions Gomez Pereira, and even the Abbé Bougeant, are often necessary to reconcile one to the spectacle.

From metaphysics and physics, the conversation turned to music. Mr. Kirwan was a devoted amateur of the divine art, which he had studied *con amore*, abroad. He had not, however, got a step further than the "*Coin de la Reine*," and was as furious against Gluck, and as enamoured of Piccini and Sacchini, as when he assisted to hunt down the "*Titan et l'Aurore*," of Jean Joseph of Meudonville, in spite of Madame de Pompadour's patronage of French discords. I was at this time, with respect to Italian music, what St. Preux was before Lord Bomston had discovered the musical bump on his eyebrow, and gave him a new sense. I was so enthusiastic in my passion for Irish music, and had obtained such a pretty little success by playing the airs of Carolan on my Irish harp, that I had actually engaged with Messrs. Power and Golding, of London, to collect and arrange twelve Irish melo-

dies, with words translated from the Irish, which they brought out shortly afterward, supplying the idea to Mr. Moore of a similar, though immeasurably superior, publication. I thought, therefore, I would say a little word in favour of my poor *Gramachrees*, *Emunch-a-Knuics*, and other bardic strains, which had, even in infancy, produced the most extraordinary effect on (what is vulgarly called) my nerves. This was worse than Helvetius. Mr. Kirwan called my taste barbarous, and became quite vehement in his expression of abhorrence of Irish music.

"Madam," he said, "I left Ireland at your age; and full, as you now are, of all the vulgar errors of enthusiastic patriotism, I thought there was no poetry like Irish poetry—no music like Irish music. When I returned, I could not endure either. However, at Christmas and other great festivals, I had the servants' hall, at Cregg, thrown open to all comers, beggars, bards, and story-tellers, after the old Connaught fashion; and at night I took my place in the midst of them, round the blazing hearth, and made my eleemosynary guests each tell a story, recite a poem, or sing a song, in Irish; and it was amazing how few among them could not recite or sing: and some of them did both right well. It was thus I came at various fragments of Ossian, which Mr. M'Pherson has dressed up and changed at pleasure, and assigned to the Scottish bard. But the music was not endurable—at least it put my nerves to the torture. Madam, it was quite too much for me—it almost threw me into convulsions."

While he was speaking, I had drawn my harp forward, and begged permission to sing to it the fine old *cronan* of *Emunch-a-Knuic*, or, "Ned of the Hills," which dates back to the time of Henry VIII. He bowed his head in sullen assent; but before I

had finished the first stanza, the tears gushed from his eyes, and seizing my hands, he said with vehemence, "Madam, I wont hear you—'tis terrible—it goes to the very soul!—it wrings every nerve in the body!"

"Then, Sir, I ask no more—the effect which Irish music produces on you is the best proof of its excellence."

"You may as well say that the howl of a dying dog, which would produce much the same effect, is the proof of its excellence; my dear child, give up your Irish harp and your Irish howl, and study Italian music—you are worthy of knowing it! for you have a true musical organization, but it is all perverted. You must take tea with me on Thursday next; it is my shaving day. I only pay visits, or receive ladies, twice a-week, on my shaving days. I have a good piano-forte, and a fine collection of Italian music; you shall try both—my tea-table hour is half-past five!"

It happened that on the very evening for which Mr. Kirwan engaged me to take tea at his house in Rutland Square, at half-past five, I had engaged myself to take tea at half-past seven with another celebrated invalid, Mrs. Henry Tighe, the charming Psyche of poetical fame, and my most dear and early friend.

The notes which reminded me of my double and very interesting engagements, lie at this moment before me; they are extremely characteristic:—

"Mr. Kirwan presents his best respects to Miss Owenson, and writes to remind her of her kind promise to take tea with him to-morrow evening, at half-past five. She will meet Mr. Hamilton Rowan, and Professor Higgins. Mr. Kirwan will

take the liberty to send his carriage for Miss O. at a quarter past five."

"MY DEAR GLORVINA,

"Lest, in your poetical flights, you should forget to-morrow evening, this is to request you will come early, and bring your best looks and best spirits with you; the beautiful Lady Charlemont is coming to meet you expressly. Lady Asgil brings Sir Arthur Wellesley,* and William Parnel joins us as soon as he can—so come. If you would like Harry to go for you, say so.—Yours ever,

"M. TICHE."

The sober carriage of Mr. Kirwan was at my door to the moment; and, to the moment, I was at his. My punctuality pleased him; for his own whole useful and laborious life was governed by a sense of the value of time, and of the virtue of punctuality. I was received by his man, Pope, who seemed born and organized to be the servant of a philosopher—the perfect image of Dumps, the servant of old Rueful, in "The Good-Natured Man," pale, lank, solemn, and demure.

On entering the drawing-room, the heat was so excessive, that I was afraid I should never go through the *séance*. Although it was a fine mild spring evening, an enormous fire blazed on the hearth; and a screen, of considerable dimensions, drawn closely round it, excluded every breath of air. Within this enclosure, on a large cumbrous sofa, sat the advocate of phlogiston. He was dressed in the same roquelaure and slouched hat, in which he had visited

* The Duke of Wellington was the Secretary of State for Ireland.

me; with, however, the addition of a shawl wrapped round his neck. On either side him, were placed two persons, who, in their appearance, seemed to form the extreme links in the human chain. The one was the good and simple Professor Higgins, with his *air de prêtre*, the very *beau-idéal* of a catholic curate, from his own wild native district of Erris; the other a Roman tribune of Rome's best day, already indeed past the prime of life, but with the figure of an athlete, and a bust of the antique mould: it was Archibald Hamilton Rowan, who had then but lately returned from his long exile in America. The impression made on me, by this now best and truest of old friends, has come forth, after a long lapse of years, in my last work, the "O'Briens and the O'Flahertys;" and some resemblance to what he then was may be found in his fine picture by Hamilton.

Over the chimney-piece was a portrait of Catherine of Russia, "whom," said Mr. Kirwan, "I call Catherine the Great, in contradistinction to Frederick the Infamous, her rival, and by far her inferior."

Meantime, a conversation, of the most scientific nature, was resumed, which my entrance had interrupted, and in which my ignorance and timidity, at the learned society into which I had been so strangely introduced, prevented me from taking a part.

As soon as Mr. Kirwan had settled the constitution of acids with Professor Higgins, he turned to me, with an air of great gallantry, and said, "Let us now revert to a sweeter subject." Lord, how I fancied myself Miss Helen Maria Williams, gallanted by Dr. Johnson! After some very civil things, such as young ladies like to hear, even

from old gentlemen (at least I did), he drew up a *précis* of the respective merits of Miss Edgeworth's admirable "Castle Rackrent," and my "Wild Irish Girl," very flattering to both. On the exaggeration so unjustly imputed to Miss Edgeworth's most graphic work, he related the following anecdote:—

"When I first returned to my native province, from abroad, I accepted an invitation to a gentleman's house. After a day's sport on his estate, I arrived late, and found that the house had been burned down the night before.—I was only one of many guests. We had a joyous supper in the roofless hall; and sheds and temporary sleeping places had been erected for us in the barn, behind the ruined mansion. When we retired for the night, I was led to my pavilion, accompanied by my two favourite dogs, like one of Ossian's hunters. Extremely tired, and, perhaps, not particularly sober, I threw myself on the bed prepared for me, from which I had a distinct view of the stars, through the crevices of the roof. However, I slept soundly, though not uninterruptedly; for, in the middle of the night, I was roused by extraordinary sounds of groaning, and grunting, and squeakings, and squallings, mingled with the sharp bark of one dog, and the low growl of the other, as if in deadly contest with some unwelcome intruder. All that I had then heard of the atrocities of the disturbed state of Ireland rushed to my mind. I started on my legs in search of my fowling piece, but fell over a huge bleeding body, which seemed to give out its last groan under my pressure; my fierce dog, as I supposed, still clinging to the wretch's throat. I called for help—again got upon my legs; and staggering to the entrance, and opening the door, found that I

had indeed been attacked, and by the swinish multitude. The fact was, that I had been lodged in the pig-sty, to which the lawful, but extruded proprietors had, by a natural instinct, made their way back in the night; and my faithful dogs, who had in vain striven to repel the invaders, had laid at my feet the mother sow, "with all her pretty little ones," bleeding and vanquished. The scene lay near Ballinoshe; the time was, literally, 'the day after the fair.'

While this conversation was passing, Pope made tea behind the screen, and served it with a most characteristic formality. The scene was a picture; and though I afterward drank tea with Mr. Kirwan fifty times, this first impression was the strongest, and the most lasting. At eight precisely, the party broke up; and Pope conducted me back to the carriage. Before, however, I drove off, he was already employed in unscrewing the knocker:* for, from that hour, the mansion of the philosopher was hermetically sealed against all intrusion.

The manners, the habits, the accent of Mr. Kirwan, were marked by all those distinctive peculiarities which belonged to his creed, his education, and the country and times in which he flourished. Born in an epoch of Irish story, the most marked, the most heart-rending, under that *régime* of terror, when the worst penal statutes against the catholics were first imposed;—born too, and receiving his first impressions in a province, poetically and historically the most Irish, he preserved, from the early part of the last century to the commencement of the present; the high and formal courtesy, the gallant bearing,

* To Mr. Kirwan is attributed the story of electrifying his knocker; an excellent hint to persons whose notoriety exposes them to self-interested intruders, who have no claim upon their time and attention.

and chivalrous point of honour, the broad guttural accent, and the idiomatic phraseology, with which the brave officers who survived the siege of Limerick went forth into voluntary exile, to fight and perish in foreign lands for foreign interests.

His opinions were as singular as his appearance and his manners. Abhorring the atrocities of the fatal reaction, which retarded the benefits and stained the cause of the French Revolution, he was frank and loud in his reprobation of that ruinous and continental war by which the British empire was drained and demoralized, to revive pernicious institutions, and restore a race, the antitypes of the unfortunate family which England and herself spurned and dethroned. It was curious to hear him calculate the expenses of this war, and the disbursement which would have been required to build a causeway or pier that should extend across the channel.—“Works,” he said, “of almost equal magnitude had been completed by the ancients, with less aid from science than could now be had. Buonaparte,” he would add, “would effect works as useful and sublime, if the old dynasties would let him alone.”

Starting with his favourite maxim, that—“with labour and money nothing is impossible,” he was wont to bring all his wonderful geological knowledge to bear upon this favourite scheme. He tumbled the mountains of Wicklow into St. George’s Channel—played with Bray-head and the Sugar-loaf, as if they were jack-stones,—finished by walking dryshod from Lowth to Holyhead, and reckoning his way, not by knots, but by milestones.

His opinion on the antiquity of knowledge was as original as his belief in the mechanism of the brute creation. He asserted that we borrowed much of our astronomical lights from the antediluvians, and

that Adam spoke Greek with a purity that might have elicited the applause of the Portico. In his religious opinions he was equally paradoxical; and he remained unsettled upon some leading dogmas to the last, though it has been said of him, "that he died *ferme catholique*, as he had lived *preux chevalier*." He was extremely fond of female society, and not only invited ladies of all ages to his early tea-parties, but went to theirs; always stipulating for leave to *bring* and *make* his own tea, and to come and go at his own hours.

The last time I ever saw him was at a tea-party made expressly for himself at my sister's, Lady Clarke's, a few months before his death; and the company which he upon that occasion drew round him, formed a curious contrast with the grave and learned philosopher who was its centre. It is the misfortune of all the high officials who come to Ireland, that they are, instantly on their arrival, surrounded by a certain heir-loom circle, whose interest is to keep aloof from the lords of the ascendant the genuine talent and true and independent gentry of the country. Whoever takes the trouble to read the court circular of the Irish dignitaries, will find, that precisely the same persons dine with his excellency Lord B., who dined with his excellency Lord A; and so on through the vice-regal alphabet: while commanders-in-chief, and chief commanders, run the some gauntlet, and "go by the scrip," just as their military predecessors did before them.

At a moment when Mr. Kirwan's name and works were familiar to all Europe, and when he was a fellow of nearly all its learned societies, the fact was utterly unknown to the English officials, military and civil, who then held the *dessus du pavé*, that Dublin was distinguished by the constant res-

dence of one, who did such honour to its literary and scientific annals. Having to plead as an excuse to Sir Charles and Lady Asgill, for a late attendance at their dinner-party, that if I were served up with the game of the second course, it would be because I was first to assist at a tea-party given to Mr. Kirwan, they expressed not only surprise at his residence in Dublin, but an anxious curiosity to be of the tea-party.

Not to take the philosopher by surprise, the proposition was made to him by Lady C—— and myself—and I remember his answer was, “Madam, I am always pleased to mingle with people of the world. I neverknew one, even the lightest and most frivolous, from whom something was not to be learned, that threw a light upon the follies and virtues of society. I once lived much in the world of fashion myself; and was as foolish and as vain as the worst. But I stipulate for my own hours, my own *tay*, and my own *tay-pot*.”—This being agreed, the party assembled in Lady C.’s drawing-room, at the usual fashionable hour for morning visits. Under the pretence of bringing his staff, Sir Charles Asgill was accompanied by his amiable nephew and A. D. C., Captain Bouverie, and several other young officers; and Lady Asgill smuggled in General and Lady Augusta Leith. In short, the whole 8 o’clock dinner-party of Merrion-square were seated at my sister’s tea-table before six.

The contrast of the gay and gallant *militaires*, with two or three learned professors who had been invited to meet Mr. Kirwan, and above all with the strange costume and erect posture of the philosopher himself, formed a pleasant picture. It was very evident, that there was a previous inclination on the part of the fashionables towards mystification; and

that a very active system of quizzing had been organized by the two *grandes dames de par le monde*, in which every beau present was to have played his part—(within, however, be it acknowledged, the bounds of perfect good-breeding,—a virtue never transgressed with impunity in the society of the polished and courteous Sir Charles Asgill). It happened, however, in this instance, (as I have known it happen in a hundred others, when genuine talent is brought to stand the brunt of that frivolous *persiflage*, in which fashion delights and exults,) that those who came to scoff—remained to admire. Unconsciously led on to talk, by the insidious propositions of the mystifiers, to whom his charming, unadulterated brogue was a feast, he gradually dilated into the most communicative pleasantry. His ever anecdotic mine was opened to its richest abundance; and so full of interest, novelty, and information was his discourse, that even appetite stood in check while he spoke; and Mr. Kirwan, (whose tea was his supper,) was the first to give notice to his delighted listeners, that it was time for them to go to dinner.

Like all people of eminent talent, Mr. Kirwan was extremely *naïve*; and, where his feelings gave the impulse, he seldom “stood on the order” of form, or of cold discretion. At that deplorable period which preceded the rebellion, when a gentleman of the highest respectability, of large fortune and of ancient family, was imprisoned, tried, and condemned, for a libel on the nefarious government of those times, it entered into the littleness of the Irish Secretary of State to refine upon the severity of punishment, by adding to it the indelible stain of disgrace:—in a word, it was intended to place a member of a noble family, a man of the highest cha-

acter, in the pillory. When the intelligence was communicated to Mr. Kirwan, his emotion is said to have been extreme; and ordering his carriage, he instantly drove to the castle—pushed by the familiars who filled the anteroom of the Secretary of State's office, and bolting into the presence of the arbitrator of a nation's fate, demanded if what he had heard was true? A placid and rather affirmative smile, was the equivocal and somewhat contemptuous answer. After a moment's indignant pause, Mr. Kirwan, drawing up his figure to its full height, in his broadest brogue and deepest tones, said—"Sir, if this unfortunnte gentleman is guilty of high treason, bring him to the scaffold; if of a libel against your government, fine and confine him: but if you send such a personage to the pillory, you will revolt the whole order of gentlemen throughout Europe against you."—The *order of gentlemen* was, in Mr. Kirwan's estimation, the first order in the world; and none better illustrated its pervading spirit than himself.

The long and truly paternal kindness, with which Mr. Kirwan honoured me, from the moment of our first acquaintance till his death, I consider as among the proudest circumstances of my life. When the first attack was made on me, in the first number of the Quarterly, he was nearly as indignant as when Mr. * * * was threatened with the pillory—not more through his partiality to me, than through the disgrace it might inflict on the "*order of gentlemen*," should any one suppose a gentleman capable of so unmeasured an attack upon a young and defenceless woman.

He was extremely desirous, at that epoch, that I should write a prize essay for a premium, offered by the Dublin University, for the best essay on literary Fiction. I wrote an essay—but it was not a *prize*.

one. It was my first and last attempt at writing "to order," and was undertaken against my taste and will, merely to please him. Having found it some years back, I gave it to Mr. Colburn for the "Literary Gazette," at that time under his direction.

The last letter which I had the honour to receive from Mr. Kirwan, a short time before his death, is extremely characteristic of that high tone of courtesy which he always assumed with women; and it is remarkable for the perfect intellect it displayed, even when its gifted writer was dropping into the grave:—

"DEAR MADAM,

"I received your letter about three weeks ago; and your present, which does me so much honour, about a week ago: but I cannot say that your letter gave me any pleasure, as it announced your intention of speedily departing from this country.

"Allowing you to do so, is indeed an accumulated proof how little it is worthy of the praises you bestowed upon it. Sentiments corresponding with your own, are now to be found only among those of genuine Irish origin, who now, alas! constitute the lowest class in the wretched population of the western coast of Connaught—despised and persecuted for nearly three centuries; though you will probably be rendered much more happy, by absence from a scene which would daily afflict a heart of such exquisite sensibility as your own—a sensibility which, I must say, among your numerous accomplishments, forms the essence of your character.

"It will, I hope, if report says true, be engrossed by a person worthy of its selection, who in return will derive his happiness from repaying it by equal constancy and intensity.

"This is the ardent hope of your faithful friend,
and most affectionate humble servant,

"R. KIRWAN.

"Dublin, January 25th, 1812."

TRÈS-DISTINGUÉ.

WHO would think that this prevailing term in the nomenclature of modern fashionable jargon is as old as the time of Ninon de l'Enclos, for whom it was invented? Love had already taken shelter in her wrinkles,* and intrenched himself behind her spectacles; and there was still found about her a charm for which there was no name, which the old triumphed to observe, and the young could neither resist nor define. They at last called it something *distingué*. In one of her clever letters to St. Evremont, speaking of a young friend he had presented to her, she says:—"J'ai lu devant lui votre lettre, avec des lunettes; mais elles ne me siéent pas mal; j'ai toujours eu la mine grave. S'il est amoureux du mérite qu'on appelle ici *distingué*, peut-être que votre souhait sera accompli: car tous les jours on vient me consoler de mes pertes par ce beau mot."†

* "L'amour," said the Abbé Chalieu, "s'étoit retiré jusque dans les rides de son front."

† "I read your letter before him, and in spectacles; but they become me pretty well. I have always had a grave look. If he is in love with that merit which is here called *distingué*, your wish may perhaps be accomplished. Every day I am consoled for my lost attractions by this fine phrase."

AUX PETITS SOINS.

tits soins! *Alte-là*, my dear little women, prudes, and platonists; and you who are of these, but have just philosophy enough at the ends of your rosy fingers, to prefer that pleasant sort of intellectual sensations, which come of the *soins* of an agreeable and clever man, with all its imaginative enjoyments, which are followed neither by satiety nor remorse, but are yet far removed from a "cool suspense from pleasure and pain."

Such women understand this gracious era in the excess of a "*sentiment*," much better than the rash. They have the prudence to put off the day, when it shall be no more, as long as they can, and they have the wit and information to fill the interval between growing prepossession, and unequivocal passion. They have a still more pre-arranged art—that of inspiring *les petits soins*, when *les grands* have passed for ever. In England, indifference treads closely on the steps of love—in France, the most lasting and tender friendship is made up of fragments of an old passion.

RAPIDITY.

" You sleep so slow, Father."
Young Rapid—Cure for the Heart Ache.

I CANNOT get on with Mr. — : not but he is a sensible and a clever man; but then, in thought, delivery, and enunciation he is so slow!—We start together fairly from the same point, and gain the same end; but he goes by the heavy Birmingham, and I am booked by the mail. One of the great characteristics of modern times is rapidity. A slow developement is, in all things, either an evidence of the timidity of ignorance, or a proof of inefficiency and feebleness. This is particularly illustrated in the science of music. The earliest musical compositions which have reached us, are dragging, drawling, monotonous chants. Even the "*Charmante Gabrielle*" of *Henri Quatre*, and the cavatinas by *Salvator Rosa*, resemble a modern psalmody.

From *Sacchini* to *Rossini* (no very great interval, by-the-by), the successive changes in music are all characterized by increasing rapidity. *Rossini* condenses into a single bar musical ideas, which the masters of the last century would have extended through many phrases. The reiteration which occurs in the grounds of *Purcel*, *Corelli*, &c. &c., is a result of the same cause: one idea in these compositions makes the whole *frais* of the piece, and is husbanded and worked like a geometrical problem. The compositions of *Rossini* form an epoch in the history of

the most delicious of arts. Rossini is the Voltaire of music. He has given it an impulsion, which the world was ready to receive, but which no preceding composer had the genius or the courage to propose. Paesiello, his predecessor, was the Rousseau of his art. Full of sentiment and eloquence, he was deficient in that force of truth, that energetic vigour of conception, which irresistibly masters the passions of the auditor. We sleep with soft dreams in listening to Paesiello; but we are awakened by Rossini.

People must have spoken more slowly in the time of Queen Elizabeth, than they do now. The cambrous construction of phrases in the written style of that day, obliges one to read the page of an old author much slower than a modern one. It must have been the same in conversation: there being then fewer ideas in general circulation, the speaker had further to seek for subject-matter: the words did not "come skipping rank and file." There was no ready money of mind in the market, although there were immense masses of unworked ingot, lying in the great bank of the national intellect. There was not then, as now, a ready-made set of conventional phrases, which served to dress up every man's thoughts, and often to supply the place of thinking; every man was then his own thinker. A rapid speaker, in such a state of things, must have outstripped his hearers. "In all kinds of speech," (says Lord Bacon) "either pleasant, grave, severe, or ordinary, it is convenient to speak leisurely, and rather drawlingly, than hastily; because hasty speech confounds the memory, and oftentimes, beside the unseemliness, draws a man either to stammering, a nonplus, or harping on that which should follow; whereas a slow speech confirmeth the memory, and addeth a conceit of wisdom to the hearers,—besides

a seemliness of speech and countenance." Here then was the *beau-ideal* of a good speaker in the time of Queen Elizabeth.

One of the most satisfactory evidences of improvement in the details of civilized life, is the increased rapidity of all its movements. Rapidity is power—omnipotence goes at once to its object, and reaches it. To be slow is to be feeble—to measure human action against time, and to overtake it, is to double existence. To live fast (properly understood) is not to wear out life briefly, but to multiply the sensations which extend it. The more thought, action, intellect, and sensation can be crammed into this "petty space," the longer we live: for it is not years, but the consciousness of living, that gives the true longevity.

"Mourir, sans avoir vécu,"

is therefore the fate of the whole tortoise tribe, whether in or out of their shell.

The events of the American and French revolutions have quadrupled the existence of the generation which witnessed them. More has been done in the last century, than in any three centuries which preceded it.

By rapidity, however, is not intended that description of haste, which is proverbially said to make the worst speed. That which is done imperfectly will require more time to mend, than, if properly bestowed, would have been consumed in its original completion; and as imperfect objects are objects not adapted to their end, to employ them in that state occasions an equal waste of time in the business of life. The merit of the rapidity of civilization is, that it is combined with a greater perfection in the arts and sciences.

We travel over Macadamized roads, and sail in steam vessels, not only quicker, but safer and more comfortably. The modern speaker is not only more rapid, but clearer, and less exposed to fallacy. Society begins its progress, like life, feebly and slowly; the human intellect develops itself in ponderous poems, of a thousand and one cantos, essays in folios, and "hints," in quarto. Journeys, in the infancy of society, are made in moving houses, over trackless mountains and "crack-skull commons," at the rate of ten miles per day.

"Slow and sure," was a maxim of the wisdom of our ancestors; and (to end with the pleasant farce whence I took the motto for the head of this rapid rhapsody) "keep moving" should be the epigraph of ours. The "*en avant*" of Buonaparte set all the old dynasties in a bustle; and but for the whip and the spur, and the "*allez, allez,*" of the French Revolution, we should have their absolutisms still moving their "*minuet de la Lorraine.*" They have been taught to dance in quicker time, since that important *pas grave* nearly caused a war, in which half Europe was to have taken a part.

MY FIRST ROUT IN LONDON.

Of all metaphysical mysteries, there is nothing more difficult to get at than the mystery of memory. Montaigne, complaining of his, observes, "*et suis si excellente en oubliance, que mes escripts mêmes, je les oublie, pas moins que les autres.*"* This is pre-

* "And I am myself so excellent at forgetfulness, that I forget my own works as much as those of other persons."

cisely my own case. I never could remember any thing I wrote, beyond the moment when it was going through the press. The other evening I found a book lying open on the piano-forte, which somebody had just laid down, on being called to take a part in the *Preghiera* in the opera of the *Mosé*, and I chanced to light upon a high-flown and rather nonsensical passage, of which I could make nothing. This induced me to look at the title page. It was "The Wild Irish Girl," seventh edition. I had not seen it for years. I was amused, and a little surprised.

In *diebus illis*, it was with my style, pretty much as with the oaths of Frère Jean de l'Entommoures—" *Comment, vous jurez, Frère Jean?*"—" *Ce n'est (dit le moine) que pour orner mon langage: ces sont couleurs de rhétorique Cicéronienne.*"* All that literary counsel, acquirement, and instruction give to literary composition, was, in my early career of authorship, utterly denied me. The imagination, or feeling, or whatever it was, that carried the "Wild Irish Girl" through seven editions in less than two years, was wholly unsupported by any of the advantages which reading, the world, society, or the judgment and taste they bring with them, could confer. I began to write almost as soon as I could read; and the premature development of imagination, which enabled me to combine and invent, was inevitably destitute of that command of language, which books and reflection only give. Hurried on by the "thick-coming fancies" of a fervid but uncultivated mind, I did not always pause to secure the best and most precise expression by which they could be

* "You swear, Friar?"—"It is only for ornament. These are the colours of Ciceronian rhetoric."

conveyed; and except when I had to give utterance to some strong feeling, (for feeling always finds its own language,) I was often, as the sportman's phrase is, "at fault." Conscious of the poverty of my vocabulary, I frequently borrowed a word, or adopted a phrase, as Frère Jean did an oath, not for its precise application or intrinsic meaning, but simply "*pour orner mon langage.*"

I remember once making this humble and plenary confession under very singular circumstances, and with a most propitiating effect. It was on the occasion of my first appearance at a great London rout, and at the moment when the uncalculated success of the juvenile work alluded to, had given me that sort of vogue which learned pigs, and learned ladies, and other things more valuable for their singularity than their utility, enjoy in common.

A few days after my arrival in London, and, while my little book was running rapidly through successive editions, I was presented to the Countess Dowager of C——k, and invited to a rout at her fantastic and pretty mansion in New Burlington-street. Oh, how her Irish historical name tingled on my ears, and seized on my imagination; as that of her great ancestor, "the father of chemistry, and uncle to Lord Cork," did on the mind of my old friend, Professor Higgins. I was freshly launched from the bogs of the barony of Tíreragh, in the province of Connaught, and had dropped at once into the very sanctuary of English *ton*, without time to go through the necessary course of training in manners or millinery, for such an awful transition: so, with no *chaperon* but my incipient notoriety, and actually no toilet but the frock and the flower in which, not many days before, I had danced a jig, on an earthen floor, with an O'Rourke, prince of Brefney, in the

county of Leitrim, I stepped into my job-carriage at the hour of ten, and, "all alone by myself"—as the Irish song says—

"To Eden took my solitary way."

What added to my fears, and doubts, and hopes, and embarrassments, was a note from my noble hostess, received at the moment of departure, which ran thus:—

"Every body has been invited expressly to meet the Wild Irish Girl: so she must bring her Irish harp.
"M. C. O."

I arrived at New Burlington-street without my Irish harp, and with a beating heart; and I heard the high sounding titles of princes and ambassadors, and dukes and duchesses, announced, long before my own poor plebeian Hibernian name puzzled the porter, and was bandied from footman to footman, as all names are bandied, which are not written down in the red-book of Fashion, nor rendered familiar to the lips of her insolent menials. How I wished myself back in Tíreragh with my own princes, the O's and Macs; and yet this position was among the items of my highest ambition! To be sought after by the great, not for any accidental circumstance of birth, rank, or fortune, but simply "*pour les beaux yeux de mon mérite*," was a principal item in the utopia of my youthful fancy. I endeavoured to recall the fact to mind; but it would not do: and as I ascended the marble stairs, with their gilt balustrade, I was agitated by emotions, similar to those which drew from my countryman,

Maurice Quill,* his frank exclamation in the heat of the battle of Vittoria, "Oh, Jasus, I wish some one of my greatest enemies was kicking me down Dame-street!"

Lady C——k met me at the door of that suite of apartments which opens with a brilliant boudoir, and terminates with a sombre conservatory, where eternal twilights fall upon fountains of rose-water which never dry, and on beds of flowers which never fade,—where singing birds are always silent, and butterflies are for once at rest.

"What, no harp, Glorvina?" said her ladyship.

"Oh, Lady C——!"

"Oh, Lady Fiddlestick!—you are a fool, child; you don't know your own interests. Here, James, William, Thomas, send one of the chairman to Stanhope-street, for Miss Owenson's harp.

Led on by Dr. Johnson's celebrated "little Dunce," and Boswell's "*divine Maria*," who kindly and protectingly drew my arm through hers, I was at once merged into that mob of *élégantes* and *élégants*, who always prefer narrow door-ways for incipient flirtations, to the clear stage and fair play of the centre of a salon. As we stood wedged on the threshold of fashion, my dazzled eyes rested for a moment on a strikingly sullen-looking, handsome creature, whose boyish person was distinguished by an air of singularity, which seemed to vibrate between hauteur and shyness. He stood with his arms crossed, and alone, occupying a corner near the door; and though in the brilliant bustling crowd, was "not of it."

* Maurice Quill, the Sir John Falstaff of the Irish troops, during the Peninsular war, who assigned as a reason for entering into the 71st regiment (I believe) his desire to be near his brother, who was in the 72d. His personal circumspection was said to be merely assumed, as a medium for his humour.

other)—do, my dear Mr. T——, find me Mr. Sheridan. Oh! here he is! what! you know each other already; *tant mieux*. This is Lord Carysfort. Mr. Lewis, do come forward; that is Monk Lewis, my dear, of whom you have heard so much—but you must not read his works, they are very naughty. But here is one, whose works I know you have read. What, you know him too!" It was the Hon. William Spenser, whose "Year of Sorrow," was then drawing tears from all the brightest eyes in England while his wit and his pleasantry cheered every circle he distinguished by his presence.

Lewis, who stood staring at me through his eyeglass, backed out at this exhibition, and disappeared. "Here are two ladies," continued her ladyship, whose wish to know you is very flattering, for they are wits themselves, *l'esprit de Mortemar*, true N——'s. You don't know the value of this introduction. You know Mr. Gell, so I need not present you, he calls you the Irish Corinne. Your friend Mr. Moore will be here by-and-by. I have collected "all the talents" for you. Do see, somebody, if Mr. Kemble and Mrs. Siddons are come yet; and find me Lady Hamilton. Now pray tell us the scene at the Irish baronet's in the rebellion, that you told to the ladies of Llangollen; and then give us your blue stocking dinner at Sir Richard Phillips's; and describe us the Irish priests. Here is your countryman, Lord L——k, he will be your bottle holder."

Lord L——k volunteered his services. The circle now began to widen—wits, warriors, peers, ministers of state. The harp was brought forward, and I attempted to play; but my howl was funeral; I was ready to cry in character, but endeavoured to laugh, and to cover out my real timidity

an affected ease, which was both awkward and politic. The best coquetry of the young and inexperienced is a frank exhibition of its own unsolicited feelings—but this is a secret learned too late.

A ball at Mrs. Hope's drew off my auditory, and towards midnight, the ring was thinned to a select few, some fifty particular friends, who had been previously asked to stay supper. It was my good fortune to be placed at table between Lords Erskine and Carysfort, who had both been particularly kind to me during my perilous probation; and now, no longer "the observed of all observers," I had leisure to observe for myself, and to be amused in my turn. I had got into a very delightful conversation with the veteran beaux, when Mr. Kemble was announced. Lady C——k reproached him as "the great Mr. Kemble;" and then, looking significantly at me, told him who I was. Kemble, to whom I had previously been already presented by Mrs. Lefanu, acknowledged me by a kindly nod; but the intense stare which succeeded, was not one of mere recognition, it was the glazed, fixed look, so common to those who have been making libations to altars which rarely liberate them for ladies' society. Mr. Kemble was evidently much preoccupied, and a little exalted; he appeared actuated by some intention, which he had the will, but not the power, to execute. He was seated *vis-a-vis*, and had repeatedly raised his glass, and stretched it across the table, for the purpose, as I supposed, of helping himself to some boar's head in jelly. Alas, no!—the *bore* was, that my glass happened to be the object which fixed his tedious attention; and which being a true Irish *caul* head, dark, cropped, and curly, struck him as a particularly well-organized Brutus, and better than

any in his *répertoire* of theatrical perukes. Succeeding at last in his feline and fixed purpose, he actually struck his claws in my locks, and addressing me in the deepest sepulchral tones, asked—"Little girl, where did you buy your wig?"

Lord Erskine "came to the rescue," and liberated my head.

Lord Carysfort exclaimed, to retrieve the awkwardness of the scene, "*les serpents de l'envie ont sifflés dans son cœur ;*" on every side—

"Some did laugh,
And some did say, God bless us!"

—while I, like Macbeth,

"Could not say, Amen."

Meantime, Kemble, peevis, as half-tipsy people generally are, and ill brooking the interference of the two peers, drew back, muttering and fumbling in his coat-pocket, evidently with some dire intent lowering in his eyes. To the amusement of all, and to my increased consternation, he drew forth a volume of the "Wild Irish Girl," (which he had brought to return to Lady C——k and, reading, with his deep, emphatic voice, one of the most high-flown of its passages, he paused, and patting the page with his fore-finger, with the look of Hamlet addressing Polonius, he said, "Little girl, why did you write such nonsense? and where did you get all these d——d hard words?"

Thus taken by surprise, and "smarting with my wounds" of mortified authorship, I answered, unwittingly and witlessly, the truth: "Sir, I wrote as well as I could, and I got the hard words out of Johnson's dictionary."

The eloquence of Erskine himself would have pleaded my cause with less effect; and the "*J'y vallois*" of *La Fontaine* was not quoted with more approbation in the circles of Paris, than the *naïveté* of my equally veracious and spontaneous reply. The triumph of my simplicity did not increase Kemble's good humour; and, shortly after, Mr. Spenser carried him off in his carriage, to prevent any further attacks on my unfortunate head—inside or out.

Talking over this scene, not long since, at Lady C——k's, with a lady who had been present, it came back with all its circumstances to my memory, and with a keen recollection of the pains and penalties incidental to inexperienced and unprotected female youth, when forced by necessity to step across the threshold of domestic privacy, and to carry to the mart of public suffrage the feeling and fancy intended by nature for home consumption. Between my first and my last appearance in the elegant and hospitable salons of New Burlington-street, what a difference!—in person, feeling, sensation, intellect,—the all that should make identity, yet does not! I cannot trace the least similitude between Mr. Kemble's "little girl," and the proscribed of emperors and the excommunicated of popes. There is more philosophy in the little woman who went "to market her eggs for to sell," than the world is aware of; and I have been tempted to quote her "Lord have mercy on me! *sure this is none of I?*" as often as my illustrious countryman Daniel O'Connell has applied to his own Ireland his favourite quotation of

Great, glorious, and free,
First flower of the ocean, first gem of the sea."

I have repeated it, when telling a droll Irish story to the minister who had set his seal to Ireland's ruin;

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in the Tuileries, when I stood face to face, "bandying compliments with majesty;" in the Quirinal, when in *tete-à-tete* with a cardinal secretary, amid scenes that belonged to the middle ages; in the Palace Borghese with the family of Napoleon Buonaparte; on the Pentine Marshes, when receiving the confessions of a Carmelite monk, on his pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Peter; and in the vice-regal circles of Dublin Castle, when a liberal Lord Lieutenant shook my right hand, at the same moment that a grand master of an orange lodge shook my left!

I remember relating my *début* at Lady C——'s, and my scene with Mr. Kemble, to the late Marquess of A——, as something more true than possible. He told me that he had known him to do things more eccentric, when under the influence of that one glass too much; and he quoted an anecdote which occurred at the ——. "Kemble was seated between the two Scotch Dukes of H——, and of A——; the conversation turned on genealogy, and the two peers grew warm upon the relative antiquity of their houses. Kemble, who had not drunk pending the argument, and who saw with despair the bottle in abeyance between their graces, after muttering his impatience for some time, broke out on a sudden with, "D—— both your bloods, send round the wine!" Nobody," added Lord A——, "appeals to Kemble sober against Kemble tipsy—he is such an excellent fellow, and such a perfect gentleman."

Perhaps no actor of any age or country (Garrick excepted) lived upon such intimate and equal terms with the great, as Kemble. There was such a natural patent of gentility about him, that the highest nobility of the land gave way to it. He and Talma were the last of their class and caste. Not but that there are now as perfect gentlemen on the stage as

ever; but the heroic age of the theatre is over. For me, as long as Potier, and Perlet, and Liston, remain, *je ne demande pas mieux*. I would rather laugh with Falstaff, than shudder with Macbeth; and with respect to French tragedy and French declamation, I am just where I was, when I wrote "France." Notwithstanding all the "*Lettres adressées à Mi Lady Morgan*," to prove that she is a blockhead and knows nothing of the matter, she at least knows what amuses and what bores her—and all she has done, is to say so.

To observe of any gentleman, now, that he drank, would be to utter a disgraceful reproach. Yet, up to the last quarter of the century, the male nobility and even royalty of Great Britain, gave themselves up to inebriety; so that to be "as drunk as a lord," was, in reality, a patrician distinction. Charles the Second was frequently seen reeling to his home in Whitehall, through the streets of London, in the midst of his brawling riotous courtiers, with "the fiddles" in his van, to serenade the Dutchess of Portsmouth, on his return from "poor Nelly's" lodgings.

In more recent and refined times, modern Falstaffs, and heirs apparent, have had their "Boar's Heads," as favourite resorts, though not in Cheapside. Hereditary legislators and representatives of the people, have staggered home together in the neighbourhood of St. Stephen's—and the representative of majesty itself, lying under his own dinner-table, has given rise to the Catholic witticism of a great law officer, who observed, that "the *Host* wanted elevation." Even in times still fresh in the memories of many, sobriety was deemed a suspicious virtue, as well as a vulgar one; and to be a seven-bottle-man, was to qualify for the highest society. But where, now, is the nobleman or gentleman,

who would not shrink from such a reputation? School of the sticklers for the good old times, and for the wisdom of our ancestors—you, who place the excesses of intemperance among the social virtues—what say you to the sobriety of the present generation?

LORD ERSKINE.

POOR Lord Erskine! how the memory of the first odd and pleasant evening which introduced me to the distinction of his notice, refreshes all my after remembrance of his unchanging kindness, from the moment that we met in Lady C——k's conservatory, until within a few weeks of his death. Among the brightest, and often falsest illusions of our youth, are the ideas we conceive of eminent persons, of whom we have long read and heard. I could write volumes on the impressions which I received in my early and obscure youth, of the eminent and the celebrated, whose names had danced before my eyes, or tingled in my ears, in books and newspapers, in rumours and reports; and of the disappointment which followed, when my own notoriety brought me within their sphere. The first time I read of Lord Erskine was in Miss Seward's works. What a splendid picture of humanity, for one whose imagination, like the style of the fair author whose pages she gloated over, was all exaggeration and effervescence! Oh! how very much in love I then was with the *idea* of Lord Erskine!

A little further on in life, I met with an old

pamphlet, in the parlour window of a country house, and found it was the famous trial of Horne Tooke. The speech of Lord Erskine revived my early and warm impressions of that splendid person; and he of whom it had been said that "he had spoken on that momentous occasion like a man inspired, and at once redeemed the honour of his profession, and established the safety of his country," was to me just that sort of person, whom to behold but for a moment, I would have made a pilgrimage bare-footed from Tipperary (where I then was) to any given spot which he inhabited.

I met Lord Erskine, therefore, under these exaggerated notions of his genius and character; and was a little disappointed to find that he spoke like other persons—was a thin, middle-aged gentleman, and wore a brown wig. This was not exactly the impersonation of my *beau-ideal*! Genius was then with me a mode of being, splendid in its form as in its spirit. Already a little disabused, I yet could not reconcile myself to inspiration in a bob wig. Still it was a great epoch in my life, when I found myself seated by one of the gods of my idolatry—for I then had a great many; and worshipped a sort of polytheism of prepossession, which kept me in a constant alternation of hope and disappointment:—my gods being too frequently false gods, and my golden idols, images of clay. It was a still more flattering distinction, when his lordship called on me, the day after our introduction, at Lady C——k's.

From that time, till his death, we met frequently, and corresponded occasionally; just seeing enough of each other, to become intimate with nothing but our respective good qualities. He was always delightful, always amusing, frequently incoherent—and I thought, sometimes affectedly wild, at least para-

doxical. Of this, an instance occurs to me, connected with an important epoch, and with some amusing scenes, *que voila*.

It was during that grand political æra—the very hegira of rattling—when the Prince of Wales, becoming regent, left it a moment in doubt whether the old ministry would join the whig sovereign, or the whig sovereign adopt the sentiments of the tory ministers. I was then enjoying my brilliant existence, at that Alhambra of fashion, and of ministerial politics, the P—— at St——re. The noble owner of that hospitable mansion was an aristocrat in feeling and a tory in principle. The blood of the Stuarts ran in his veins; the beauty of the Darnley and the hauteur of the Bothwell were the characteristics of his distinguished person. He was so organized to be the man he was, that no education nor example could have made him otherwise. Had he occupied the throne of his ancestors, he would have been the justest despot that ever reigned; for though he loved power much, he loved truth more;—and truth is—justice. Lord A—— was a frank, aboveboard, and uncompromising politician. His pride, with which he was reproached as a vice, was his virtue. It rendered him untractable to the meanness of manœuvre, intrigue, and corruption. His opinions were in such perfect coincidence with his interest, that his marquisate and blue ribbon were not the rewards of a purchased conformity, but testimonials of ministerial good will, for voluntary and independent services, conscientiously rendered; and much as he was said to have loved such distinctions, I am sure he would rather have resigned the title and the garter, than have changed sides, or given up any cause he deemed to be based in justice.

From Saturday till Monday, (the weekly interval of public business,) was always a carnival at the P—, when the upper and lower houses seemed to send their most distinguished members to recreate in its elegant salons. The first Saturday after the appointment of the Regent brought down a multitude of visitors, the *élite* of the statesmen and stateswomen of both parties. Among these were Lord Erskine and the Dutchess of G—. It was my good fortune to be seated on a sofa with Lord Erskine, when the dutchess did us the honour to make a third in our conversation. "Oh, my lord," she said, "you ha' got the Wild Irish Girl all to yourself. Weel, she's a clever creature, but I've a great fault to find with her. She has no more sentiment than a London Missy! The first time I met her was at the Irish chancellor's. Jannie M— and I had been living among the heaths and the roses of Glengarry, and had been gloating on her 'Wild Irish Girl' and 'Novice;' and when I arrived in Dublin I was longing to know her. Weel, Lord M— made a dinner expressly. But, what was my disappointment when she said, 'Oh! Lord M—, think how unlucky I am. The very day I left B— C—, a whole jaunting car of officers were expected from Strabane.' Eh! gude God, there was sentiment with a vengeance."

This brought on the chapter of romance, national peculiarities, fetches, second-sights, &c. &c. : in the latter of which, both Lord E. and the dutchess acknowledged their belief. I could not avoid expressing some surprise that such persons should give way to the influence of such irrational superstition. The dutchess was displeased, and said, "I don't like to see young ladies setting themselves above their superiors, and giving in to free thinking. I never

knew any one cry down what is called superstition, but those who have no religion."

It was in vain that "I rose to explain." Prostration of intellect, and profound obedience in the young and inexperienced, were the order of the day; and her grace related a very curious and romantic tale of second-sight in her own family, which amused, if it did not convert me—while the affecting manner in which it was told, left no doubt as to the sincerity of the relator.

"I also," said Lord Erskine, "believe in second-sight, because I have been its subject. When I was a very young man, I had been for some time absent from Scotland. On the morning of my arrival in Edinburgh, as I was descending the steps of a close, on coming out from a bookseller's shop, I met our old family butler. He looked greatly changed, pale, wan, and shadowy, as a ghost. 'Eh! old boy,' I said, 'what brings you here?' He replied, 'To meet your honour, and solicit your interference with my lord, to recover a sum, due to me, which the steward at our last settlement did not pay.' Struck by his looks and manner, I bade him follow me to the bookseller's, into whose shop I stepped back; but when I turned round to speak to him, he had vanished.

"I remembered that his wife carried on some little trade in the old town. I remembered even the house and the flat she occupied, which I had often visited in my boyhood. Having made it out, I found the old woman in widow's mourning. Her husband had been dead for some months; and had told her on his death-bed, that my father's steward had wronged him of some money, but that when Master Tom returned, he would see her righted. This I promised to do, and shortly after, fulfilled my

promise. The impression was indelible ; and I am extremely cautious how I deny the possibility of such 'supernatural visitings' as those which your grace has just instanced in your own family."

Either Lord Erskine did, or did not, believe this strange story ; if he did, what a strange aberration of intellect !—if he did not, what a stranger aberration from truth ! My opinion is, that he *did* believe it. I had not, however, then learned upon what trifling points human credulity turns, how little even our opinions are our own, and how far the strongest minds are inconsistent with themselves, and obstinately retain the dog's-ears and folds of early impression.

Notwithstanding my heresy in the matter of second-sight, I continued to receive marks of friendship from Lord E. ; and for years after my marriage, he sent me any thing he produced in a literary way. The following note, which was written a few months before his death, closed our correspondence ; it was accompanied by his pamphlet on the Greeks. It is worth citing, as a testimony to prove that years do not make age, and that freshness of feeling, and youthful ardour in a great cause, may survive the corporeal decay, which time never spares, even to protracted sensibility :—

"DEAR LADY MORGAN,

"A long time ago, in one of your works (all of which I have read with great satisfaction), I remember your having expressed your approbation of my style of writing, and a wish that I would lose no occasion of rendering it useful. I wish I could agree with your ladyship in your kind and partial opinion ; but as there never was an occasion in which it can be more useful to excite popular feeling than in the

cause of the Greeks, I send your ladyship a copy of the second edition [of my work], published a few days ago.

“I have the honour to be,

“With regard and esteem,

“Your ladyship’s faithful humble servant,

“ERSKINE.”

“No. 13, *Arabella Row, Pimlico, London,*

“*October 11, 1822.*”

“*LADY MORGAN, Dublin.*”

The pamphlet which accompanied this note, abundantly proved, that neither the talent nor the feelings of this singularly gifted writer had abandoned him; yet circumstances had occurred, and become notorious, which implied that age had, in some respects, made sad havoc with his powerful intellect. There is nothing more curious in the history of the human mind, than the manner in which it falls to ruin; and in which splendid and magnificent fragments can subsist, in all their pristine beauty, amidst the total decay of the rest of the intellectual fabric.

LORD CASTLEREAGH.

To go back once more to the P——. How often have I seen Whigs and Tories united round its splendid hearths in the great drawing-room, innocently playing their “small games,” after having played, through the preceding week, their great game, on the opposite sides of the two houses.

How often have I seen the ministerial red box, ("big with the fate of Cato and of Rome," bearing the busy tale of some of Napoleon's unwelcome victories, or welcome defeats, or, haply stuffed with the materials of some green-bag disclosure,) scarcely deposited in the hands of its diplomatic owner, before it was suddenly jerked up into the air by the playful ingenuity of a romping peeress, and its mysterious contents scattered on the floor, while the laughing contriver of the overthrow exclaimed— "*Autant en emporte le vent!*" How often have I seen presidents of the council and lords comptrollers of royal households, taking lessons, there, in waltzing, at that time a novelty, fresh imported from D—house; while "many a saint and many a hero," who were then sinners and subalterns, trod upon those Persian carpets, which covered the paved cloisters and knee-worn cells of the ancient monks of St—e.

It was during the time passed in this delightful retreat (which was no retreat), that I had frequently the pleasure of meeting Lord Castlereagh. I say *the pleasure*, for (I take him here in his social phases only) he was one of those cheerful, liveable, give-and-take persons, in private, who are so invaluable in villa-life, where pleasure and repose are the object and the end. His implacable placidity, his cloudless smile, his mildness of demeanour, his love of music, his untunable voice, and passion for singing all the songs of the Beggar's Opera,* (in which I had always

* One evening, while thus engaged, to the utter abstraction from all surrounding circumstances, we had arrived at "Hark, I hear the toll of the bell," when a sudden crash of all dissonant sounds produced as sudden a suspension of our own somewhat heteroclitic harmonies. Tambourines, triangles, pokers, tongs, and shovels, were all pressed into the service. The ladies of the

the honour of accompanying him, because nobody else would,) his expertness at small plays, and the unalterable good humour with which he stood the brunt of the frequent practical jokes played off at his expense, rendered him most welcome in all the circles which he frequented, in the pauses of his arduous avocations.

I had then no acquaintance with European politics; but I was a furious little Irishwoman; and Lord Castlereagh used frequently to say, "no one cares for Ireland but Miss O. and I." I took this for sober earnest; and, in the pride of my ignorance and credulity, would repeat Louis the Sixteenth's "*il n'y a que moi et Monsieur Turgot qui aimons le peuple!*"

It is the recollection of that liberal and urbane spirit, which brought men of the most opposite opinions in public life, thus to mingle in the harmony of social confidence,—men who, in the high and courteous breeding of their elevated station, never suffered the acrimony of party to shed its venom on the graces of the private circle,—it is this recollection that has so often made me turn in disgust from the vulgar and brutal party-feeling, which has prevailed among the ascendancy faction in Ireland, making political differences the ground for anti-social insolence, and carrying into the club and the drawing-room, the virulence and uncharitableness of public hostility.

Between social complaisance and political compliance there is no necessary connexion; and a stern

party, thus armed for discord, had encircled us; and they added a general chorus of inextinguishable laughter, *ab libitum*, to the instrumental accompaniment they volunteered to Lord C.'s vocal performances. At the head of the band was Lady Castlereagh herself.

adherence to principle is not incompatible with a good-humoured forbearance to opponents. Lord A——, as I have said, was a warm, and a sincere politician: and, much as he lived with both parties, he would have been the last to forgive or tolerate an act of baseness in his own. On the morning of the day which decided the turn of affairs, on the Prince's assumption of the Regency, I remember his saying to me, "Lord Castlereagh dines with us to-day; if he goes with the tide, if he rats, it will be for the last time—there is an end of our friendship forever." Lord Castlereagh, however, did not rat, and we enjoyed his society at frequent intervals through the rest of the season, with that of his always joyous, pleasure-stirring Lady.

The last time I saw Lord Castlereagh was at Paris, in the year 1818, at the opening of the session by Louis the Eighteenth—a memorable epoch, and a most striking scene! I shall never forget the impression made on that occasion by the appearance of General La Fayette;—it was at the moment when the king, seated on his throne, (the princes of his family on either side, and his "*beloved peers*" and faithful commons around him,) received the oath of fidelity from all. Each individual, in his turn, on being called out by name, stretched forth his hand and pronounced "*Je jure.*" The emphasis, the petulance (so peculiar to French people in speaking), with which many eagerly and anxiously called out "*Je jure,*" who had made the same vow to every form of power which had successively followed, was finely contrasted by the calm and dignified air, and slowly articulated enunciation of La Fayette,—who, of all that vast assemblage, was the one who had never uttered his "*Je jure,*" nor pledged him-

self to the power that was not based in the rights of the people.

The moment his name was announced, and he stood forth, the type of all that was purest and best in the greatest revolution that had ever shaken the empires of the earth, a simultaneous murmur burst forth from all parties—proceeding, indeed, from various emotions, but all indicative of the intense interest his striking and venerable appearance excited. As he stood face to face with the king, and, stretching forth his hand, pronounced his vow of fealty to the first constitutional monarch France had ever seen upon the throne, what a sweep of recollections passed over the minds of the spectators! It was at this moment, I perceived the fine head, and pale, impassable countenance of Lord Castlereagh, bearing forward from the diplomatic tribune, in deep observation of the scene. In the scale of humanity, never was there a more striking contrast, than was at this moment exhibited in the persons of the founders of the National Army of France, and the perpetrator of the Union in Ireland.

MEDDLERS.

L'ABBE GAGLIANI says "that mankind are born with a disposition to meddle with other people's affairs; and that liberty consists in nothing else but the power of indulging the propensity." As a sneer against popular governments, this may be an excellent joke, but it is directly the contrary of truth. The propensity to which men are really predi-

posed, is that of enjoying the fruits of other men's industry, and of directing the actions of the public towards their own private advantage. The utility of liberty is, that it puts some restraint upon the indulgence of this inclination. The affairs of the nation are the affairs of every one of its members; and tyrants and oligarchs are the real interlopers in their *gestion*, whose interference is impossible, when the guarantees of liberty are perfect.

It is, however, quite true, that in free states the citizens are disposed to resent any abridgment of another's right, and to interfere in the concerns of the oppressed, so far as to procure him redress. Every one, thus employed, is really acting for himself, and with the perfect consciousness that he is fighting his own battle. Few of Wilkes's cotemporaries either loved or respected him, personally; but when his rights were attacked by the government, he represented the people of England; and the people had the sense and the spirit to force the ministry to desist from their violence.

PHILOSOPHY OF GRAMMAR.

I ASKED the question, should I say "every body is gone out only I," or, "only *me*?" and was answered "only I," because "only *I*" means "I alone" — "remain," being understood.

Had I used the conjunction "but" instead of "only," the proper construction would have been the same, because "but" means "be out," or, in more modern phrase, "I being out of the question."

The modern "but," said my informant, represents two distinct words, both imperatives. When it stands for "be out," it is the precise equivalent of "except," derived from the Latin. Sometimes it is used for the imperative of an obsolete verb, signifying to add, which is now retained only in the infinitive—"to boot." Let us look for an instance:—here is one in Sir Charles Grandison, which lies open before me. Harriet Byron writes, after some preliminary reflections—"But, why should I torment myself? what must be, will." The interpretation of the passage is this;—to what I have already said, *boot* (or, in modern English, *add*;) this second thought, that what must be, will; and, therefore, why should I torment myself?" These two are the only real meanings of that Proteus-like conjunction; and one or other will explain all Johnson's hundred instances, scarcely one of which he understood properly. Johnson's industry was unwearied, but his research trifling. Authority, and not analysis, was its object. Authority belonged to his day, inquiry to ours: so adieu to learning—and hey! for knowledge:—*à bas les savans! et vive le savoir!*

Alas! it makes one's head ache to look over grammatical jargon—I wrote my first twenty volumes without much troubling my head on the subject. But now "the school-master is abroad," that is, he is at home—with *me*—and my march of intellect goes on without ever budging from the fire-side. "*Mon voyage autour de ma cheminée,*" would not be the least intellectual book I ever wrote. And yet, my dear Mr. Colburn would not give me £20 for all the grammar that I may write for the rest of my life; though I rivalled in etymological philosophy "*The Diversions of Purley.*"

Before I drop grammar,—What a droll pun is

that of the grammarian presenting his book to the Académie, after the Duke de —— had advanced his pretensions to be elected one of the *quarante*, on the score of his illustrious ancestors. "*Je suis ici pour mon grand-père,*" said the duke. "*Je suis ici pour ma GRAMMAIRE,*" said his ignoble philological competitor.

By the by, grammar is the last thing that should be placed in the hands of children, as containing the most abstract and metaphysical propositions, utterly beyond their powers of comprehension; putting them to unnecessary torture; giving them the habit of taking words for things, and exercising their memory at the expense of their judgment. But this is the original sin of education, in all its branches.

MY VISITING BOOK.

"Ce seroit une belle chose que je ne susse vivre qu'avec les gens qui me sont agréables."

MAD. DE SETIGNE.

TO-DAY I looked over my visiting book, to clear out for the new year, and to eliminate some of the false and the foolish, who creep into every circle, however exclusive or small: for every body, from a dutchess to a dairy-maid, may be exclusive in her own way. Not that I meant to carry my proscription to any great extent; for if I were to admit only the honest and the clever, I might as well shut up shop altogether. There are, however, degrees in all things; and there are some, so falsely false, and so

foolishly dull, that principle and patience alike re-
and so, out they go. But what is to be done
whole incursions from remote provinces,—the
families from Bally, courts and castles, when one
a small house?—as, for example, Mrs. Botherum
Castle Botherum, Miss Botherum, Miss Anna M
Botherum, Miss Jemima Matilda Botherum, J
Honorina and Miss Frances Botherum! Col. Bo
rum (of the yeomanry), Mr. Walter York Bother
Mr. Ernest Augustus, and the Rev. Mortimer Bo
rum! Shem, Ham, and Japhet, “a terrible sig
—and all this, when one has only a reception ro
of which the divine Pasta said, the last time she
the honour to sing in it, “*On pourra aussi
chanter dans un fiacre,*” and a boudoir which m
be placed on the show-table of a moderately s
London drawing-room: and this, too, with a pas
for light as great as the Dutchess de C—,*
with lamps that would light up Erebus, and s
the slightest blot in the escutcheon of the toil
where every body comes labelled for something

No, this is beyond the acmé of human friends
Ainsi cuit, on aurait mangé son père,” says
Reynière of his favourite dish; and there are
cules in dress, manner, and bearing, which m
excuse one’s *cutting*, if not “*eating*” one’s mot
The want of birth, rank, or fortune, are such m
such inevitable accidents, such universal liabili
that nothing above the lowest order of intellect
the most degrading toadyism to the great of all s
could stoop to exclude from their society those
with the exception of such accidental distincti
possessed every other. But dress and address
within the attainment of every body; and the

* Les Veillées du Château.

MY VISITING BOOK.

who visits you in the morning in a milk-white waist-coat,* or the woman, who, in the evening, when she is announced, stops to make a curtesy at the door of your drawing-room, must be wholly beyond the pale of social redemption.

Such anomalies are always indicative of *mauvais ton*; and *mauvais ton* is the want of good sense or good company. If, however, the white waistcoat is held out as a flag of singularity by a marked man, why then it becomes a *grade* in itself, like Jerningham's blue stockings, which founded a sect in literature. But since curtesies went out with hoops and all other grotesque things, the woman who curtesies is lost. She is inaccessible to all improvements, and will bring up her children to hate Catholic emancipation, gas, steam, and M'Adamized roads; her sons will stick fast by 1688, and her daughters will propagate the family curtesy to endless generations.

In this respect, we residents are better off than the country ladies who come to their own mansions in the squares, and the "rows," and the "places," for the season, and who have the whole country rising *en masse* to follow, and to fill their drawing-rooms, just as they occupy the castle in the country, on the strength of electioneering interests or county politics and jobs. This reconciles one amazingly to the fee-simple proprietorship of a few flower-pots in

* I do not mean to say that in the progress of things it may not become perfectly justifiable to wear a white waistcoat in the morning; or that certain developements of mind, or combinations of circumstance, may not render it imperative to do so. I go but with my age; and I appeal to Lord A——y, or to my old friend Lord A——n, whether *de nos jours*, a man who pays a morning visit in a virgin-white Marseilles waistcoat, is admissible within the pale of civilized society.

the balcony—the only *terre* I could ever call my own.

What, however, particularly amused me to-day, was, not my “mere Irish,” nor my “English of the Pale” visitors; but that, in looking over my list, for the few last years, I found an absolute congress from all parts of the known world; and that representatives of the four quarters of the earth had passed through my little *taudis* in Kildare-street. There was Major St. J—— B——, from Madras; Mr. B——, from Boston; Captain I——, from Calcutta; Col. T——, from Canada; Sir C. G——n, from the icebergs of Greenland, and Col. D——y, from the Kiosks of Ispahan; with many more droppers-in from the Ganges, and morning callers from the Ohio. There were, too, the *Neri* and *Bianchi*, from Florence; Imperialists and Nationalists from Lombardy, and Guelphs, Ghibelines, and carbonari, with romanticists and classicists, from all parts of Italy.

How prettily these historico-poetical names write down among the O's and the Macs of my “native troops!” the Strozzi, and Frangipani, and Pucci, and Piasasco, and Ugoni and Pozzo, and Cimetelli, and Castiglione, and Pepe—all connected with struggles for liberty, and with illustrations in letters, both in modern and ancient times. Then comes my quota from Spain, canonicos of cathedrals in Madrid, members of the Cortes, deputies to the Pope, and ex-ministers of the constitutional régime; then follow the charming French *voltigeurs*,—*voltigeurs* of nature and the good new times, with their revolutionary names and imperial titles, my Dukes of D——a and M——llo, and the clever Du V——r and P——y, and Tha——rs; and my German professors, “truants from Gottingen,” who come

to geologize, and to see Ireland and Dr. Macartney,* and talk of Werner, and Kant, and Goëthe——.

Here, after all, lies the great compensation for the ills which authorship is heir to. It is the delightful privilege of literary notoriety to live in intelligence and communion with those whom, as Humboldt once said to me, "make the fifth part of the world so well worth the other four," the feeling and the thinking. This order constitutes the free-masonry of nature, which she has organized to explore her great truths, and to feed the lamp, which, though veiled and shadowed by a succession of errors, still burns, and will continue to burn, eternal as the cause for which it was created. It is the consciousness of a remote reciprocity and silent communion with such gifted individuals that gives the moral courage, even to a female author, to tell those bold truths, which the base, the sordid, and the corrupt, are interested to deny. The tone of mind and talent of a woman especially fits her to enter into this mystic communion with kindred thinkers spread over the whole world. It belongs to her *finesse* and spirituality, to the feeling and the fancy that breathe over all she writes, thus to open a private intercourse, through the medium of the public press, to waft a sentiment to the pole, and speed a thought to the line—to revive a fading prepossession across the steep Atlantic, and to waken a latent association beyond the Alps; to direct a sally to Calcutta; to billet a *mot d'enigme* on New York; and with the air of writing for the world, or the ambition of com-

* Dr. Macartney, professor of anatomy in Trinity College, Dublin, one more celebrated abroad than known at home—the common fate of super-eminent talent every where. Dr. Macartney's classes are attended by students from all parts of Europe and America.

posing for posterity, to feel only the inspiration of an individual influence, and to *clear out* a cargo of odd and pleasant things by the good ship *Sympathy*, certain of its reaching the destined port and of being deeply prized by the correspondent to whom they are consigned. How many pilgrims has "Julia" brought to Lausanne, and "Corinne" to Copet, who in this marching age have directed their movements to our "*Ultima Irelande*," to visit its natural wonders; and who have made a *station* on their route, to drop a bead, and tell an *ave*, at the cell of one, whose zeal (if not her works) has entitled her to some consideration from the liberal and the free. When so many delightful spirits are *abroad*, who would not be always "*at home*," to receive them? Alas, for the home!—the native home, that owes its charm, not to compatriot sympathy, or liberality, or genius, but to those

"Posters by the sea and land,"

who bring the intellect of Europe along with them, to shame our insular ignorance and bigotted prejudices.

If I had not taken this glance at my little visiting book, I should have had a solace the less to console me for the privations and sacrifices, which all who live in Ireland, from motives of private affection or public principle, must endure. There the peaceable enjoyments and courtesies of life, its distinctions and its honours, are for a *caste*; while, for all others, are reserved proscription or persecution!—the calumnies of a ribald press; and the contemptuous neglect, or (what is worse) the supercilious notice of that anti-national class, which is alike insensible to genius and suspicious of patriotism. Among the great, the in-

calculable benefits to be conferred on Ireland by Catholic Emancipation, that of bettering the condition of private society, will not be the least valuable. Great rights and advantages come remotely and at intervals, to brighten, benefit, and improve the land to which they are granted; not so the days, and hours, and minutes, that go to make up that existence, upon which a "*long account of hate*" between the oppressor and the oppressed has shed its bitter venom! What minute details of persecution!—what petty guerilla warfare, carried on from house to house, and street to street, in which no sex is spared—no virtues are a defence!—no talent forms a claim to compatriot respect!—yet such has been the state of society in the most social of all countries for more than half a century! Should that act of common justice and common sense ever pass into a law—the act for removing Catholic disabilities, Ireland may still become one of the most *liveable* places in the empire. For there are still to be found in the native land of Swift, Goldsmith, Sterne, Sheridan, Burke, Grattan, Canning, and Moore, all the elements which tend to brighten and illuminate the happiest circles. The temperament of the nation is essentially mercurial, prone to social enjoyment, affectionate, humorous, and pleasure-loving: and when the removal of those atrocious distinctions, which have so long spread dissension, and occupied the national mind with national grievances, shall leave the genius of the people to its fair and rational play, it may be prophesied that the capital of Ireland will become one of the most agreeable, if not the most important, of European cities.

Under such auspices, how delightful to open a visiting book, in which the names of all who are now divided into parties, sects, and factions, shall be

found, without recalling one unpleasant association—and when (no longer indebted for all social, all intellectual enjoyments to the foreign visiter from happier and more enlightened lands) we shall feel and own,

“ Our first, best country, ever is at home.”

FOREIGN VISITERS.

“ Point de rose sans épine.”

Oh!—*par exemple*,—here comes a pretty commentary on the above text—a paragraph from some of the ribald journals, which it would be pollution to name. It has just been sent me enclosed in an anonymous letter; for I have always some “good-natured friend” (as Sir Peter Teazle says), who furnishes me with abuse of myself, from those newspapers which I should deem it an act of the highest immorality to let into my house. I never, by-the-by, could understand the logic of those, who, professing to detest calumny, and to abhor slander, still think it no delinquency to read and to purchase the journals which exist but by their propagation. To add to the revenue of such a speculation, is to become a participator in its criminality; for if every one who disdains to be himself guilty of falsehood, would refrain from buying it, ready-made to his hand, such disgraces to the free press of the empire would be abolished more effectually than by all the restrictive laws and prosecutions for libels in the world.

Here is the paragraph alluded to:—

“LADY MORGAN AND THE AMERICANS.

“The following anecdote, in every way good, is quoted by the Yankee from the Boston Literary Gazette:—

“It was about two o’clock, P. M. when I stopped at the door of Sir Charles Morgan, Kildare-street, Dublin. I inquired for Lady M., to whom I had a letter of introduction. I was shown by the servant into a library, and, while waiting for her ladyship, had an opportunity to survey the apartment. The upper regions displayed rich rows of books, in all the modern languages, and among them several of Lady Morgan’s works, in French, Italian, and German. The lower parts of the room exhibited a piano, a harp, and a Spanish guitar, with a profusion of songs scattered up and down. There were two writing-tables, a small cabinet of minerals in a glass case, and a collection of beautiful shells, also in a glass case. Several small pictures occupied the spaces on the wall, and cameos, intaglios, medals, and other curiosities, adorned the mantel-piece. There was an air of negligence about the room, but it seemed to declare that the inhabitant of it had made every department of nature and art tributary to her pleasure.”

“But ’tis my design
To note the chamber—I will write all down—
Such, and such pictures—there the window!” &c.

Cymbeline.

Oh! that the inventory had stopped there!—For the furniture, pass! (though I deny the glass case—
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I have a total antipathy to glass cases)—but the coming to personals, as in the following *catalogue raisonnée* of beauties wanting, of charms “*absent without leave*”—this is really “too bad.” But the Yankee goes on, and so here I am, (not in kit-kat,) as sketched “at 2 o’clock, P. M.” by my American visiter—who, after “noting the chamber,” thus writes down—its mistress, unconscious as was Imogen of her midnight visiter, and as little suspecting to what sort of a limner she was sitting for her portrait, when she received this “Yankee from Boston:”

“At length Lady Morgan entered. She was short, with a broad face, blue, inexpressive eyes, and seemed, if such a thing may be named, about forty years of age. Her personal appearance is far from handsome—it is not even striking. There was an evident affectation of Parisian taste in her dress and manner.”

I appeal!—I appeal from this *Caravaggio* of Boston to the Titian of his age and country—E appeal to you, Sir Thomas Lawrence!—would you have painted a short, squat, broad-faced, inexpressive, affected, Frenchified, *Greenland-seal-like* lady of any age? Would any money have tempted you to profane your immortal pencil, consecrated by nature to the Graces, by devoting its magic to such a model as this described by the Yankee artist of the “Boston Literary?” And yet you did paint the picture of this Lapland Venus—this impersonation of a Dublin Bay cod-fish—this *pendant* to Hogarth’s *Poissarde* at the gates of Calais, who bears so striking a resemblance to the maiden ray she exhibits for sale. What is more, you painted it of your own free will and choice—gratuitously, and that too when rival Dutchesses were contending for the honour of reaching posterity through your agency, with the

beauties of Vandyke and the belles of Lely, all ready and willing to remunerate, with princely munificence, the talent "whose price is beyond rubies."

Well, I appeal from the portrait drawn by the Yankee to yours; "*et je m'en trouverai bien.*" Gladly do I "sweeten my imagination" by the recollection of those times of youth, and gayety, and splendour, in which, associated under the same roof, I sat for, and you sketched that picture, thus by contrast recalled to my recollection! I remember a minister of state cracking jokes on one side of the table on which you were drawing, a royal princess* suggesting hints, on the other, the Roscius of the age stalking up and down the room with the strides of Macbeth, and the look of Coriolanus, and half the beauties of future galleries and collections, fluttering round the exclusive patent-giver of eternal loveliness. Alas! no one could have said that I was "forty" then; and "this is the cruellest cut of all!"—Woman, the most enduring of created beings, will bear any thing but that. Had it been thirty-nine, or fifty!—thirty-nine is still under the mark, and fifty so far beyond it, so hopeless, such a *lasciar speranze voi che intrate*;"—but FORTY!—

"Take any form but that,
And my firm nerves will never tremble"—

the critical age—the Rubicon—I cannot, will not dwell on it. But oh! America!—land of my devotion and my idolatry—is it from you the blow has come? Let Quarterlys and Blackwoods libel—but the "Boston Literary!"—"Et tu Brute!"

My visitor from Boston "2 o'clock, P. M." pro-

* Her late Majesty Queen Caroline.

ceeds to give an account of my conversation, as accurately and minutely as he did the details of my house, person, and age. Having made the general remark, that "it was full of spirit and frankness," he goes on to betray to the public the confidential communications I made to him on the occasion of this his first and last visit. These amounted simply to my abusing America and Washington Irving without measure, and it appears without motive except to please my Boston visiter, who agreed with me in both instances. This was being 'frank and spirited' with a vengeance!

Now, I here openly, frankly, and spiritedly publish my protocol to the city of Boston, requiring of the Bostonians, that they give me up this morning visiter, "at 2 o'clock. p. m."—this Iachimo of literary salons—this positive denunciator of the *certain age* of ladies who wish their age to remain uncertain—this portrait painter en large, who calls little 'short' and round, 'broad,' and who

"Ne'er can any lustre see
In eyes that do not smile on me"—

—himself—this violator of confidences made on the occasion of a first visit!—this Zoilus of the toilette and Yankee '*courier des dames*;' I require the Bostonians by their gallantry and their liberalism, their love of liberty and of the ladies, that they first catch me this backwoodsman, and then leave me to dress him!—But 'tis a threat thrown away—I do not, I will not believe that an American could thus violate all principle of courtesy, gallantry, hospitality, and truth. I have received persons from all parts of the United States within the last eight years. I find on my visiting list the names of two

gentlemen from Boston, who have frequented my house within the last two years, neither of whom have committed such an act. I have not been wanting in the rites of hospitality to any one who has borne the name of an American. I honour the great cause of liberty, in the persons of those to whose fathers the world stands indebted for the greatest rally that ever was made round her standard; and "I guess" that if there is one recreant American (American by the accident of birth) capable of such conduct as my Bostonian visiter "at 2 o'clock, P. M." has exhibited, the "whole order of gentlemen in America" would disown this Arnold of private society, as they did the political traitor, who dishonoured the region of freedom, by claiming it as his country.*

IRISH UNION.

Twenty thousand pounds defeated the opposition to the Scotch union—a sum barely sufficient to stop the eloquent patriotism of a single voter, when Lord Castlereagh sold Ireland, "wholesale, retail, and for exportation." Who will say that the Irish are not a civilized people?

* Having received the proof sheet of the above little entry, (made in mere *gaieté de cœur* into my leger,) at a moment when I am surrounded by an absolute congress of the United States, presented to me by my illustrious friend, General La Fayette, I take the opportunity to say, that they deny all knowledge of the journal in question, further than such a publication had lived and died within a few weeks, and was edited by a person bearing an *Irish name*, a writer for Blackwood's Magazine.

HUMAN MACHINERY.

DUGALD STEWART, in reference to the limited circle of jests, fables, and tales, which occur in the literature of all nations, is "almost tempted to suppose, that human invention is limited, like a barrel organ, to a specific number of tunes."* The number of our wants and desires, and consequently of the modes of social relation, being fixed, the combinations of thought to which they give rise, must be fixed also. The number of these elements being small, the primary combinations of idea to which they give rise, must be nearly alike in all nations. The fact is indisputable; and it leads to very serious consequences against the doctrine of free-will.

SUICIDE.

THE love of life is the strongest of all human passions. To what end then, do we question the lawfulness of suicide? Where a law has no penal sanction, it is a dead letter: and he who dares to die, is beyond the reach of all penal influence. Suicide may be matter for religious discussion, but it is no subject for jurisprudence.

EXTERNAL EXISTENCE.

THERE never was so egregious a piece of pedantic nonsense, as the dispute against the reality of the external world. We cannot, it is said, prove the fact; but to prove a proposition means, to render it evident to the senses—nothing more. The last appeal in all disputes is to sensation. Even the abstract truths of numbers depend on simple facts, cognizable by the eye and the touch. It is, therefore, a gross misapplication of language to attempt the further proof of what is already felt. No sophism, however difficult of detection, can supersede the sensible conviction of external reality; and Berkeley himself did not run his head against a post.

The theory of this divine, adopted for the purposes of religious theory, leads at once to atheism. We believe in God, as the necessary creator of the world; but the idealist has no ground for believing any other existence than his own mind. Such metaphysics are the boast of the class, who while they refuse education to the people, have the hardihood to deny the capability of the poor man to understand his own affairs. When did the most barbarous ignorance ever fall into such mistakes, as this product of misapplied learning?

ECLECTICS.

ECLECTICS, in philosophy, are for the most part *les demi-esprits*, who are incapable of viewing facts in their wholeness; just as the eclectics in politics are they who want the honesty to be quite pure, and the courage to be quite rogues. Such persons make systems from inconsistent scraps, taken from discordant philosophy, with the same taste as the architects of the middle ages erected barbarous edifices with the beautiful fragments of antiquity.

ATTITUDES OF GRIEF.

Mr. SHANDY's observation, that grief always seeks a horizontal position, passes for a good joke; it happens, however, to be good philosophy. Grief, by exhausting the vital powers, renders an upright position irksome and painful. Who that has left or lost the object he loves, but has felt the necessity of a drooping head upon folded arms; or the solace of a total prostration of form?

Under the terrible inflictions of all master griefs, the physical and moral forces go together. For who can dissolve that mysterious union, of which so much is said, so little known, and on which for saying anything, so many have been ridiculed as spiritualists, or burnt as materialists? Man is not to be led to inquiry, with impunity. Those who so

liberally reward the impostor, never fail to persecute the teacher; and while they swallow every falsehood and fable, most injurious to their true interests and well being, with undoubting confidence, they oppose and impede every noble enterprise, and every beneficial discovery in the range of moral and physical science.

It probably arises from the acute, though not very durable sensibility of southern countries, that on the occasions of heavy suffering, the afflicted sink at once into the utter helplessness of a prostrate attitude. That which nature inspired as a relief, pride soon converted into a ceremony. As soon as the death of a near friend occurred, in any of the royal, noble, or even gentle-blooded families of the continent, the nearest relative, in former times, went to bed. There he remained, or was supposed to remain, a certain number of weeks, days, or hours, according to the rank of the person lamented, until the visits of condolence were over, and grief, regulated by etiquette, was permitted to pause, or throw off "its weight of wo." From the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, every item in the chambers and *toilette* of royal affliction, was prescribed by authority. One of the most curious pictures extant of this red-book sensibility of our ancestors, which seems upon a par with their "wisdom," is to be found in a very old and amusing French work, "*Les Honneurs de la Cour*," written by Alienor de Poitiers, Viscountesse de Furnes, a lady of the Court of the Duc de Bourgogne, in 1469. In her chapter upon royal mourning, or (in her own charming old French,) "*Sur le deuil que toutes les princesses et autres devoient porter pour leurs maris, pères, mères, et parens*," observes, that a queen of France must remain one year in the chamber, where she first

receives the news of her husband's death; and every body knows "*chaquin doit scavoir*," that the chambers, halls, &c., of the widowed queen must be hung and covered with a black cloth. A picture is always well worth a dozen descriptions, and the picture of the mourning of the Princess de Charolois, for her father, the Duke de Bourbon, is well worth transcribing.

"Son père étoit trépassé : incontinent qu'elle sceut la mort, elle demeura en sa chambre six semaines, est étoit toujours couchée sur un lit couvert de drap blancq de toille, et appuyée d'oreillers : mais elle avait mit *sa barbette*, son manteau, et chapperon lesquels estoient fourrez de *menuvair*, et avait le dit manteau une longue queue, aux bords devant le chapperon une paulme de large, le menuvair (c'est à scavoir le gris) estoit crespé dehors. La chambre étoit toute tendue de drap noir, et en bas, un grand drap noir, en lieu de tapis velu, et devant la dicte chambre où Madame se tenoit y avoit une autre grand chambre où salle pareillement tendue de drap noir. Quand Madame estoit en son particulier, elle n'estoit point toujours couchée, ni en une chambre."*

While, however, princesses were obliged to weep for six weeks in black rooms, on state beds, the

* "Her father was dead; and as soon as she heard the news, she shut herself up in her chamber for six weeks, remaining constantly upon a bed covered with white linen, and resting on pillows. She wore her stomacher, her cloak, and hood, which were lined with minever, and the said cloak had a long train; and at the borders, and before the hood, for the breadth of a palm, the minever was curled outwards. The chamber was hung with black cloth in the place of tapestry, and before this chamber was another great chamber, or hall, likewise hung with black. While Madame was alone, she did not remain on the bed, or confined to one room."

banneresses (or peeresses) were only required to shed their obedient tears and lie in bed for nine days—a very fair proportion of sensibility, between the ranks of the parties. But though it was not required that they should lie on their bed of sorrow as long as royal mourners, it was ordained that they should sit in front of their beds, for the remnant of their six weeks, “upon a piece of black cloth.” 4

“Les banneresses ne doivent estre que neuf jours sur le lict, pour père ou mère ; et le surplus des six semaines, assises devant leur lict, sur un grand drap noir, mais, pour maris, elle doivent coucher six semaines.”

A strict observance of pompous ceremonies, in nations as in individuals, is a proof of stagnant intellect. None but the vain, the idle, and the useless, can afford the leisure necessary to enact such pageants. The great, therefore, have always been the grand conservators of such abuses of time, taste, and good sense. In England, the old Dutchess of Northumberland,—in Ireland, the grandmother of the present Marquis of Ormond,—were the last ladies of quality who appeared with a running footman.

Towards the middle of the seventeenth century, the French people, energized by the civil dissensions of the League and the Fronde, had made a considerable progress in intellect and literature. It was the middle class which produced nearly all the genius that has given to the gorgeous reign of Louis XIV. the character of an Augustan age. Corneille, Racine, Molière, La Bruyère, La Fontaine, Boileau, &c. &c., were all men of the people.

But while the middle class, unimpeded by forms, and unoccupied by ceremonies, were directing the national intellect towards science, literature, and the arts, the court and the aristocracy, stopping short

with the past age, remained devoted to the observances of all the idle forms indissolubly mixed up with their exclusive privileges; and, ignorant of books, they were still deeply "studied in sad ostent," in court calendars of ancient ceremonies "authorized by their grandams."

The barbarous forms, ceremonies, and observances of the fifteenth century were in full operation in the court of Louis XIV., and are recorded with the same unction by Dangeau, as by the Dame Alienor of Poitiers.

In a work, which says more for the necessity of the French Revolution, and its inevitability, than all that Jacobinism ever preached from the tribune, or fulminated from the press,—he relates circumstantially all the ceremonies observed on the death of the Dauphin, and the prescribed forms of grief strictly adhered to by the royal widow. Even the Princesses of the blood, it appears, were still obliged to grieve in bed. "*Madame la Duchesse (says Dangeau) reçut les complimens sur la mort de M. le Duc; elle était sur son lit et en chaperon, qui est un habillement des princesses du sang, quand elle recevoient en cérémonie les complimens sur la mort de leurs maris.*"*

What a charming picture Madame de Sévigné has left on record of the manner in which the Duchesse de Longueville received "*les visites de doléances,*" on the death of her gallant son the Comte de St. Pol.—One is absolutely seated within the *Ruelle*, and gazing on those beautiful eyes, steeped in tears of maternal despondency, which once nearly

* "The dutchess received compliments of condolence on the death of the Duke. She was on a bed, and in her hood, which is the dress of princesses of the blood, when they receive state the compliments on the death of their husbands."

brought the Duc de la Rochefoucauld to the scaffold. Even that anti-sentimental Princess, *La grande Mademoiselle*, takes her despair to heart on the loss of her lord, and receives the visits of condolence paid her by her friends, on the king's breaking off her marriage with De Lauzun, as she must have received them had she become his widow.

The origin of the form lies in nature—its absurdities are peculiar to despotic governments, where all is form, and where kings themselves, as the Spanish ambassador said, “are but ceremonies.” The governments that belong to constitutional institutions are not thrown upon the conservation of such barbarous etiquettes; and if English queens and princesses are not obliged to weep for their near relations in bed for six weeks, for the amusement of a crowded and idle court, they probably owe to *Magna Charta* the liberty of mourning how they please, as long as they please—or of not weeping at all, if they please not to weep.

At the epoch of the French Revolution, the forms of the court of France were virtually as barbarous as those of the court of the Duc de Bourgogne in the fifteenth century; and the description left on record by Madame Campan of the queen's receiving the “*chemise*,” is infinitely more indecent, and quite as barbarous, as any thing recited by Dame Alienor de Poitiers, of her “*princesses, comtesses, et autres grandes dames*,” or by Dangeau in his punctilious record of the ceremonious absurdities of Versailles and the Tuileries in the time of Louis the XIVth, and the Père de la Chaise.

By-the-by, I have a whole chapter to write upon beds, sofas, *canapés, ruelles, tabourets, lits de repos, &c. &c. &c.*—and a most philosophical chapter it will be.

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RELIGIOUS DIABOLISM.

Le Comte de Ségur observes, "*Si Dieu a fait l'homme à son image, l'homme le lui a bien rendu.*" Reason leads to the discovery of the divine attributes as pure abstractions; but as no man can rise to the conception of higher principles of action, than those of which he is himself conscious, when fools or impostors throw the divinity into action, they necessarily impart to their idea something of their own weakness and infirmities. Let the creed of any sect be as pure and as elevated as it may, the mass of bigots, hypocrites, and mal-organized beings among its professors, inevitably end in worshipping a demon. They may continue to call the idol of this fabrication, the reflection of their own vices and follies, "most wise, or most merciful," &c. &c., but they attribute to their fearful phantom, their own hateful passions and narrow views: and the result is a being, just so much worse than themselves, as he is more powerful and more uncontrolled. Such is the origin of religious diabolism—for an illustration of which see the self-tormenting sects of India, who preach a doctrine of perpetual suffering and bodily anguish, as being most pleasing to the God of all good. See, too, the gloomy Calvinists, and long-faced sectarians, and the dark preachers of sacrifice all over the world. Between the religion of love and fear, what a difference! It is that beautiful traditional picture of the human divinity, the *Ecce Homo* of Carlo Dolce, opposed to the grim and gaunt idol of the pagodas of the unhappy Hindoos.

FÊTES, PARTIES, AND SOIRÉES.

WHAT a terrible thing it is to give a party in Dublin!

“Double, double, toil and trouble,
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.”

It is no joke even in London, where every thing is to be hired, from the chairs to the company; where “society to let,” has been a sign set up by more than one leader of *ton*, ready to fill the house of any Mrs. Thompson, or Mrs. Johnson, upon the understood terms of no meddling on the part of the hostess, and no obligations to make a due return on the part of the guests. What is strange in all this toil of pleasure is, that not only the good sort of people have a great deal to do, in getting up a party, but that the great themselves, (such of the great as do not live in the “houses,” modelled on a French hotel,) have nearly as much trouble to make “ample room and verge enough” to suffocate their friends commodiously, as the twaddles in Bloomsbury, the tabbies of Finsbury, or the dwellers in any other *terra-incognita* of Mr. Croker’s topographical map of fashion.

I once caught a certain “bonnie dutchess,” up to her eyes in lamps and loungers, garlands and wax lights, and the rest of the *materiel* for a party, an hour before the throwing open of her room to that “world,” which her talent and pleasantry so long governed and cheered. As I was a *Missy*, her

good-natured grace had bid me come very early, that she might see how I was dressed: for she took a kind interest in me, for no other reason, that I know of, except that I stood in need of it. Early, therefore, I went, but so early, that all the behind-the-scenes bustle was still in its fullest activity.

The Dutchess of —— then resided in Lord A——st's house, which afforded quarters much too circumscribed to hold her legions of fashion; and all her ingenuity was applied, in order to make crushing room for five hundred particular friends. What a hurry scurry! footmen, still in their jackets, running about with lights to place and replace, like the clerical scene-shifters in *Santa Maria Maggiore* at Rome, on a Christmas-eve,—the porter half-liveried, the page half-bedizened, and the French *femme-de-chambre*, with her hands in the pocket of her silk apron, chattering to every body, and helping nobody!

All this was very striking, but very comfortless; so I sauntered out of one room into another, and had just drawn near to the only fire I met with in the *suite*, when a loud hammering behind me induced me to look back, and there, mounted on a step-ladder, stood a bulky, elderly lady, in a dimity wrapper, and a round-eared cap, knocking up a garland of laurel over a picture of some great captain of that day, military or political, (I forget which,) while an argand lamp burned brightly before it,—a votive offering to the idol of the moment!

As I took the elderly lady for a housekeeper, I asked her if the dutchess was still in her dressing-room? "No, child," said the elderly lady, "the dutchess is here, *telle que vous la voyez*, doing that which she can get none of her awkward squad to do for her:" and down sprang the active lady of seventy, with a deep inspiration of fatigue, ejacu-

ating, "Gude God, but this pleasure is a toilsome thing."

So saying, she bustled off, and in less time than could be imagined, reappeared in the brightest spirits and the brightest diamonds,—I had almost said the brightest looks that illumined her own brilliant circle. Hers was what Horace Walpole calls "the true huckaback of human nature;" and to the last it showed the strength and beauty of the web.

This party turned out one of the most agreeable I ever was at in my life. I spent the evening, seated on the second flight of stairs, between Lady C—— L—— and Monk Lewis. The beautiful Lady Oxford sat a few steps above us, the Aspasia of the Pericles who lay at her feet, wooing in Greek, in spite of Johnson's denunciation against learning in love; while Payne Knight looked on, with "eyes malign, askance." On the landing-place beneath, squeezed, sauntered, or halted, many a (*now* dowager) dandy and top-sawyer of fashion, who received our grape-shot, or gave us a *batterie d'enfilade* in return, as they crushed on. At two in the morning, Lady C—— L—— proposed that we should go and sup snugly at M—— house, and return to waltz, when her grace's rooms should thin;—and so we did,—for

"Such were the joys of my dancing days."

But to return to those who "to a party give up what was meant for mankind." A most interesting book might be made on the philosophy of parties, which would include a brief abstract of the times in which they were given, and throw a glaring light on the manners, habits, and tastes of nations, in all parts of the world, and at all epochs; from the *soirées* of Aspasia, to my own little *soirée* last night

in Kildare Street. What were the Dutchess of G——on's or Lady C——k's party-giving talents, great as they were, to those of Cleopatra, to her aquatic party down the Cydnus?—What to this, were the white-bait excursions, or even the Marquis of Hertford's festivities on the Thames?

The most splendid fête of modern times was that given by the grand Condé to his cousin Louis the Fourteenth, at Chantilly—memorable for the heroic death of that *preux* and martyr of the kitchen, Vatel, which forms so amusing a page in that breviary of all that is pleasant, the letters of Madame de Sévigné. The story is told in a hundred other accounts of the *fasti* of those gorgeous days; but who can relate like her?—No man that ever wrote, not even Horace Walpole, the first of all English *raconteurs*—nor, except Madame de Staël,* any woman either.

The most sumptuous private party of our days was the Boyle Farm entertainment. The relays of shoes were, at least, a novel idea: but pleasure is the end of all social assemblies, (as, under a variety of pompous names, it is of life itself,) and I doubt whether all the shoes in Borsley's shop would excite one pleasurable sensation except in the possessor of some *joli petit pied de Cendrillon*. However meritorious, therefore, for its originality, it was, for the rest, altogether English. It encouraged trade, and provided comfort. But the great, the true merit of this *partie des notables*, was, that to qualify for an invitation, neither genealogical trees, though deeper rooted than that of the Croys,† nor all the wealth of

* Mademoiselle Delaunay.

† The family of the Duke de Croys is, I believe, one of the oldest in France. The entreaty of one of the duke's ancestors to Noah, of "*Sauvez les papiers des Croys*," is well known.

all the Rothschilds, sufficed singly and alone, if nature refused to countersign the passport of admission. Countesses rejected—dutchesses passed over—and the sovereigns of Almack's, the absolute queens themselves forgotten, or forbidden, made way for the *bel air* of nature. Youth, beauty, talent, wit, grace, and agreeability (provided they dressed well) found no exclusion from the extreme exclusionists of all besides. This trait of fashion forms a good augury of times, in which the intrinsic is in all things about to take the lead of the extrinsic. The last touch of perfection in civilization, is a just appreciation of the value of nature.

Parties, as the term is applied throughout Great Britain to private assemblies, were unknown on the continent, till the late swarming of the English abroad, who carry their own habits with them every where. In France, before the revolution, there was nothing that resembled a London rout. No *bals parés*, nor fêtes of any kind were given in Louis the Fourteenth's time, except to the royal family, by the *haute noblesse*, or the ministers. Next to the fête at Chantilly, the most sumptuous on record, was the entertainment given at Vaux by the unfortunate intendant, Fouquet, to the King, Queen Dowager, and Madame de la Vallière.

It was a redeeming point in all such festivities, that talent and intellect entered for something. Plays, masques, and interludes were written for the occasion; and it was for Fouquet's fête, that Molière wrote his delightful comedy of "*Les Fâcheux*," an admirable subject for a royal auditory, exposed as all princes are to the tiresomeness of eternal sycophancy.

This fête is also remarkable as an illustration of the falseness, vanity, and feebleness of him for whom

it was given, and of the vice of the whole system which prevailed in France, up to the time of the revolution. The king, who had forgiven his minister his exactions from the famishing people, his depredations on the provinces, and his wasteful prodigality of the public money, could not brook the superiority of Vaux over St. Germain, the splendour of a party exceeding any thing given at the Louvre or Fontainebleau, and the impression it might make on the heart of his mistress. The ruin of Fouquet, long remotely meditated, was now determined on; and the good taste of his courtiers alone prevented the royal guest from arresting his host, in the very midst of the gayeties got up for his own pleasure and amusement. This party was given on the twentieth of August, and the *bienséance* of the court put off the arrest of the party-giver till the seventh of September.

Opposed to such royal fêtes, a delightful contrast is presented in the private society of Paris, always distinguished as *la ville*, in opposition to *la cour*. What charming pictures remain to us of the little *côteries* of the Hôtel Carnavalet, the suppers at Ninon's, the *soirées* of the Hôtels de la Rochefoucauld and Coulanges, and the *Mercuriali*, or Wednesday evenings, of Menage. The circle seldom included more than eight or ten persons, who met to laugh with Molière, and Boileau, at the vices of the court, or the absurdities of the Hôtel Rambouillet (the blue-stocking rendezvous of that day). "Monsieur de Rochefoucauld," says Madame de Sévigné. "wished me to go to him this evening to hear the reading of a comedy by Molière, '*Les Précieuses*.' After a joyous supper on a pigeon pie, at Madame de Coulanges's," (whose own wit was said to be *une dignité*;) "we amused ourselves by going at mid-

night to fetch Madame de Scarron *du fin-fond du Fausbourg St. Germain*, beyond Madame La Fayette's, and almost at Vaugirard, in the country." This topographical sketch is worth something, independently of the frolic of the gay grandmother, taken at midnight, to Vaugirard, from the Marais, where her own hotel stood, and still stands.

Towards the conclusion of Louis the Fourteenth's reign, from the time when Madame de Maintenon, (no longer the Madame de Scarron of Vaugirard,) brought religious hypocrisy into fashion, the private society of France degenerated, and intellect lost ground. "I hate people that reason," said the king, sharply, in answer to some clever observation of the son of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld.

La Bruyère describes the *décadence* of society at this period, with his usual talent for exquisite observation; and in doing so, he has left the following beautiful picture of the style of good company, which prevailed in the private circles of Paris, after the stirring times of the Fronde. "*Les conversations légères, les circles, la fine plaisanterie, les lettres enjouées et familières, où l'on étoit admis seulement avec de l'esprit, tout a disparu.*"* "The women of our days," he continues, "are either devotees or coquettes, gamblers or *ambitieuses*; some of them are all these at once. The rage for favouritism, play, gallantry, and confessors, has got possession of the fortress, and defends it against the intellectual and the witty." Still there was always in France a little band of the faithful, to tend the altar and trim the lamp of the true worship; and if, as La Bruyère

* "The easy conversations, the circles, the delicate pleasantry, the familiar and playful letters, to which wit and intellect alone gave access—all have disappeared."

says, "Voiture and Sarrasin were born for their age, and for the Rambouillets and the Longuevilles, parties as intellectual, and as agreeable, were presided in after times, by D'Alembert, Diderot, De Boufflers, and Guibert, in the drawing-rooms of Mesdames Tencin, Du Deffand, L'Espinasse, and Montmorenci."

While private society was thus making its progress upon the true principles of ease, pleasure, and intelligence, the descendants of Louis the Fourteenth, and his circle, were kept as close to the precedents established at Versailles and Chantilly, as the age would permit; and the fêtes given at L'Île Adam, Chantilly, and the Palais Royal, immediately before the revolution, were still directed by *un auteur bel esprit*, who made as much a part of the household, as the cook or maître d'hôtel. Collé suited his poetry *de circonstance* to the taste of the Palais Royal; Laujon was the Pastor Fido of the muses and graces of Chantilly; and Pont de Veale, the egotistical intimate of the egotistical Du Deffand, was the *bel esprit* of the Prince de Conti, with the title of reader and *Sécretaire des commandemens*. The poor *bel esprit* held a most mortifying position between a menial and confidential friend. His privileges were to have a room in the palace, to follow his prince to the country, and to be allowed to come in with the dessert after dinner, and eat ices, standing behind the chairs of his patrons, for three quarters of an hour. These privileges, which were privations, were as mortifying as they were *bien constatés!*

In England, from Mrs. Masham's dull political assemblies, to the good routs of modern times, nothing resembling the French *soirée* existed, if the blue-stocking parties of Mrs. Montague, and the brilliant and refined *réunions* of Devonshire House

are excepted. Buonaparte, who feared the *salons* of Paris more than the Aulic Council, or the cabinet of St. James's, discouraged private parties: and taking exception to those of Madame de Staël, sent her to give her little senate laws at Copet. On the return of the Bourbons, the exigencies of the times congregated into small and intimate parties the followers of the different factions; and all Paris was broken up into coteries. In 1818, when things were more firmly established, *on avoit changé cela*, the English magnates had set the fashion of English routs, and French ladies went about saying, "Only imagine, ten cooks and thirty-two decorators are employed for the rout of my Lady H——." Great assemblies were affected by all the English, which, generally speaking, consisted of just such English and Irish as nobody in London and Dublin cares to have with the addition of some of the old emigrant noblesse, provided by certain female purveyors, whose early residence in Paris had exchanged their English obscurity for foreign importance.

As I was perfectly independent of these officious *fournisseurs*, and knew all that was best worth knowing in France, living, as I should wish to do everywhere, with the fifth part of the world, instead of going to an English rout, I determined on giving French *soirées* myself.

"Take a day," said Denon, "and your rooms will never be empty;" and in the confidence of this prophecy, I took my day; nor would I have exchanged some of my Wednesday evenings for all the evenings that dignified the *Mercuriali* of Menage. With such men, as Denon, Humboldt, La Fayette, Langles, Segur, B. Constant, Manuel, De la Rochefoucauld, De Staël, Jay, Jouy, Dupaty, Talma, with half the *côté gauche* to boot, at my parties, it is little

to be wondered at if admissions to them were canvassed as a distinction, particularly by strangers: and many even of the ribboned members of the ultra noblesse, wedged in between a *doctinaire* and a *modéré*, like an anchovy in a sandwich, ventured now and then to peep in, for the purpose of seeing, once in a way, *les hommes marquans du siècle*—to hear Talma recite, and Jouy read.

On these occasions, one of the great attractions was La Fayette. The moment he appeared (and his erect and noble figure, and lofty air, distinguished him above the rest), a crowd of young men who had watched for his arrival, followed and surrounded him, and their ardent, upturned faces, and sparkling eyes, formed a striking contrast to the benign serenity of his calm and venerable countenance; while their rapid and eager questions were equally opposed to the measured and emphatic enunciation with which he replied.

It was extremely pleasant on these occasions to see the "*avant, pendant, et après*" of the revolution united, and forming one piquant and instructive *tableau*. The presence also of the Marquise de Vilette, with some few of her contemporaries who still lingered on the surface of society, was always a striking circumstance in the picture; and some little traces of the *toilette* of 1776 (the epoch when she was by the side of Voltaire, to replace the crown he declined, or to assist him to the *fauteuil*, the throne of his triumph) were still visible in her dress, along with the miniature of her adopted father, which she always wore, as her order of merit.

In looking over the early pages of my "log-book," I find the following entry, dated Rue de Helder, Jan. 1819. It is just legible to myself, so I will clear it out, and enter it here as an *à propos*.

A charming and crowded *soirée*, not however "*pour les beaux yeux de mon mérite*," but because it was known that Talma was to give a scene from Macbeth, and Madame Duchenois to read an act of Jouy's new tragedy, suppressed by the minister of police. What a congress of talent! The Count de Segur, Denon, B. Constant, and Langles in one group; General La Fayette, with the Duc de Broglie, Auguste de Stael, the Marquis Capponi, and the Colonel Favier in another; General Berthier at the centre of a circle of pretty women, among whom was the Princesse Jablonowska, whom Napoleon pronounced to be one of the most charming persons of her country, where all the women are charming; and the Comtesse de la Rochefoucauld, with her "*grâce, plus belle que la beauté même*," and the Beauveaux, that splendid family which would have been the inspiration of a Titian, and given him brighter models of loveliness than the Famiglia of Cornaro. There was my dear friend the Laird of Bara, in full regimentals, from the *réception* of the Duc d'Orleans, and a knot of young Americans, with the agreeable members of their embassy. And then, for my Irish quota, there was he of whom it may be said, that he was "*né pour tous les siècles et avec tous les talens*,"—the last best specimen of Irish wit, and Irish humour, who, whether he talks Greek with Porson, Irish with O'Leary, or French with B. Constant, leaves it in doubt to what age or country he belongs—the delightful P. L—. Then there were my two most distinguished countrywomen, Ladies —, chatting with Lydia White, who always says the best thing that is said in whatever language she speaks; and the Dutchess of D—; with her sibyl look drawing off Denon, to talk of those arts she loved so sincerely and protected so liberally.

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Dupaty also was there, who promised to read us some of his *delateurs*, and would not ; and Jay, and Etienne, and the heart and soul of the Minerve and the Constitutionnel, and Charles Pougens, (as I was told,) for I could not make my way to the anti-room, where, among La Fayette's *belle jeunesse de France*, stood the friend of D'Alembert and Diderot, the most agreeable blind man of this or any other country.

Just as Mademoiselle Duchenois and Talma sat down to the reading table, and began the tragedy which was a censure on its censurers, the Kaimechan of Wallachia came in, all cachemires and turban, embroidery and brilliants. What a sensation among the Parisian *petites maitresses* ! Here were shawls that might have purchased the whole extreme *droit*, and sold France back to its old master. What added to the sensation was, that my servant Le Clair announced him as the Persian ambassador, — '*mon illustre confrère*,' in the Freemasons Lodge of *Belle et Bonne*, who had been expected. So it was some minutes before we could get back from the Arabian Nights to our own, which terminated splendidly with Talma's acting the scene of Macbeth and the witches, thrown into a dream (by Ducis) which Macbeth relates to his wife—a most cold conception, but most wonderfully represented. How much of Talma's genius was lost, by his being only seen and heard in the immensity of the *François* ! What struck me most was the graphic splendour of Shakspeare's genius, piercing through the still medium of French declamation—the picturesque vitality of his fine dramatic action, coming out through the tameness of narrative, which, however freely given, (and it was given with a force inconceivable to those who have not seen Talma act in private,)

is always a tame vehicle when compared with dialogue.

A ball at a banker's carried off the *bel air* of my party before midnight: and so Denon, Talma, Langlés, and Madame La Vilette, with some half a dozen others, remained round the fire, to chat. Talma took down from the mantel-piece a book, which had just come in. It was Madame de Genlis' "Extraits de Dangeau." "This, at least," I said, "will bring us into fashion with the Bourbons." "Not a bit," said Denon: "they know each other too well." Talma fell upon the anecdote of the two actors, who were dismissed from the theatre and ruined, because they had displeased the Dauphine *par deux sottis placets*. At this act of littleness, Madame de Genlis cannot restrain her admiration. "If," she said, "Louis the Eighteenth should dismiss two great actors for want of respect, there would be a general insurrection in society. Yet this event made no sensation in Louis the Fourteenth's time."

"*Il est passé le bons vieux temps*," sung Talma, from a vaudeville, which Carbonel had been singing. "I remember," said Madame de Vilette, "when young Vestris sprained his ankle, and could not move, the queen, who had her brother, the Emperor Joseph, in her box, sent behind the scenes to insist on his dancing: "*Ne fut ce qu'un entré.*" The thing was impossible, and the minister Breteuil immediately signed an order to arrest Vestris, who was sent to La Force."

Talma shuddered; and Denon told the anecdote of the old *Dieu de la Danse* on this occasion, "*C'est la première brouillerie de notre maison avec la famille des Bourbons.*"

I think it was Langlés who said, that the nickname of *La Mère de l'Eglise*, by which Madame de

Genlis is distinguished among the wicked wits of Paris, is not a modern malice. It was given her on occasion of her publishing "*La Religion Considérée*," &c., a deep theological work, written when she was the platonic friend of *Egalité*. This Christian work was a most unchristian attack on the philosophers, whom she hated, as mothers of the church alone know how to hate.

"The actor's privilege, however," said Talma, "of being insolent, did not compensate the degradation of the caste, whose liberty and life were at the mercy of every court favourite, from the prince of the blood to his *valet de chambre*."

"Still," I said, "the actors had a fine time of it under Louis the Fourteenth. It was an allusion to the wealth and consequence of La Dancour, that La Bruyère has said, that the actor, lolling in his carriage, casts its mud in the face of Corneille, who goes on foot."

"Yes," said Talma, "but La Bruyère has also said, that we in France think of the actors like the Romans, and live with them like the Greeks."

"The favour of the great," said M., "unaccompanied by their esteem, is not a distinction, but a disgrace."

The conversation reverted to Dangeau, Madame de Genlis, and Demontey's amusing extracts from the same work, which form the most humorous comment that could be given on Madame de Genlis. Madame de Sévigné had long since made hers, when describing a day at Versailles, "*On parle sans cesse, et rien ne demeure sur le cœur; et Dangeau est ravi de tout ce caquet*."* What a motto for his book!

* "They talk there without ceasing, but nothing remains in the heart of all they say; and Dangeau is ravished with this gossip."

DOCTRINE OF CAUSATION.

ONLY think of my giving myself the air of talking metaphysics this morning, and throwing in a word on the *Doctrine of Causation*, merely to show before the Prince C——li, Count del P——o, and L—— B——, who were breakfasting with us. A look from "my master" convinced me, that like *Cathon*, "I had got "*furieusement dans l'énigme*;" and with the distressed Irish gentlewoman, whose necessities obliged her to cry "hot mutton pies," and who always added, "*I hope nobody hears me,*" I too hoped my observation had escaped the ears for which it was intended; and so I began to recommend the beauties of the county of Wicklow to my guests, and made "pure description hold the place of sense," or *non-sense*. When they were gone, we fell to talk upon the subject, and here was the result.

The idea of cause is a consequence of our consciousness of the force we exert in subjecting externals to the changes dictated by our volition. From this we deduce the presence of a force, which is the *sine qua non* of those other changes in matter, in which we have no part. It is this association of ideas which predisposes the savage to impute intelligence and volition to the unknown causes of natural phenomena. Experience, showing the constant concurrence of certain antecedents with certain consequences, while it dispels the error of the savage concerning voluntary agents, strengthens the notion of natural causes into a principle. The

human mind cannot conceive a cause which is not necessary; because the same experience, which proves that it is a cause, proves the universality of its antecedence to the effect, with which it stands in relation.

THE COUNTESS D'ALBANY.

TALKING of the accidents, incidents, and odd conjunctions of travelling, it happened, one fine autumnal morning, at Florence—(and oh, for the Tuscan autumn! with its “Tuscan grapes,” fresh olives, and autumnal flowers, which give the Tuscan capital its pretty name)—it happened that my illustrious countryman, Mr. Moore, my husband, and myself, were seated on a sofa in our old palace in the *Borgo Santa Croce*, looking at the cloud-capped Apennines, which seemed walking in at the windows,—and talking of Lord Byron, (from whose villa on the Brenta, Mr. Moore had just arrived,) when our Italian servant, Pasquali, announced “The Countess D’Albany.” Here was an honour which none but a Florentine could appreciate! (for all personal consequence is so local!) Madame D’Albany never paid visits to private individuals, never left her palace on the Arno, except for the English ambassador’s, or the Grand Duke’s. I had just time to whisper Mr. Moore, “The widow of the Pretender! your legitimate queen!—and the love of your brother poet, Alfieri;” and then came my turn to present my celebrated compatriot, with all his much more dura-

ble titles of illustration: so down we all sat, and "*fell to discourse.*"

I observe that great people, who have been long before the public, and feel, or fancy, they belong to posterity, generally make themselves agreeable to popular writers; and they are right; for what are the suffrages of a titled *coterie*, which can "bear but the breath and suppliance of an hour," to the good opinion of those, whose privilege it is to confer a distinction, to awaken an interest that vibrates to the remotest corner of the known world. Kings may give patents of nobility—genius only confers patents of celebrity. One line from an eminent writer will confer a more lasting dignity, than all the grand and archdukes, that ever reigned from Russia to Florence, can bestow.

Madame D'Albany, already forgotten as the wife of the last of the royal Stuarts, will live as long as the language of Dante lasts, in the lines of Alfieri.

The Countess D'Albany could be the most agreeable woman in the world; and upon the occasion of this flattering visit, she was so. She could also be the most disagreeable; for, like most great ladies, her temper was uncertain; and her natural hauteur, when not subdued by her brilliant bursts of good humour, was occasionally extremely revolting. Still she loved what is vulgarly called fun; and no wit, or sally of humour, could offend her.

We had received very early letters from London, with the account of the king's death (George the Third). I was stepping into the carriage, to pay Madame D'Albany a morning visit, when they arrived—and I had them still in my hand, on entering her library on the *rez-de-chaussée*, where I found her alone, and writing, when I suddenly exclaimed with a French theatrical air,

° Grande Princesse, dont les torts tout un peuple déplore.
Je viens vous l'annoncer, l'Usurpateur est mort."

"What usurper!" asked Madame D'Albany, a little surprised, and not a little amused.

"Madame, *l'Electeur d'Hanovre cesse de vivre!*" The *mauvaise plaisanterie* was taken in good part; for, truth to tell, though the Countess D'Albany always spoke in terms of respect and gratitude of the royal family, and felt (or affected) an absolute passion for his present Majesty, whose picture she had, she was always well pleased that others should consider her claims to the rank of queen as legitimate, of which she herself entertained no doubts. She, however, affected no respect for a husband, whom, living, she had despised for his vices, and hated for his cruelty.

IRISH RELIQUARIES:

ONE of the most curious Irish reliquaries extant is the Caah of the O'Donnels, still in the possession of that ancient family. I gave a description of it in my novel of 'O'Donnel,' which brought me, for the first and only time in my life, within the walls of a court of justice. The circumstance is illustrative of Irish manners and opinions, and is therefore worth relating. It should seem that a tradition had been handed down from the old times, forbidding, under some terrible 'Blue Beard' penalty, the indulgence of an unhallowed curiosity respecting the contents of the Caah; and that, in the memory of man, it had never been opened. When it was placed, with

Other family documents, in the custody of the Ulster king at arms, that gentleman, it was alleged; had, with the nautral curiosity, the birth-right of the children of Eve, (who are more or less Prys or Pandoras,) indulged himself with a peep into the Caah; for, else, how could Lady Morgan describe it? It so happened that, though the lineal descendants of the O'Donnels have for some generations been Protestants, the eldest of its female members, and the immediate proprietress of the relic, still retained a fanciful and sentimental, if not a religious superstition on the subject; and if the king at arms really looked into the box, he found at the bottom, not hope, but its antipodes—a law-suit! The lady brought her action for the lost services of the mystery; and I, who had received my information from the kindness (and general knowledge of such antiquities) of the defendant, was subpoenaed to prove that he was better acquainted with “such secrets in this farthel and box, which none must know,” than he could be, from a mere external inspection.* Fortunately for all the parties concerned, just as the cause was about to be called on, the good taste, and timely intervention of the other and younger members of this most respectable and excellent family, prevailed with the plaintiff to abate something of her resentment, and the dispute was settled *l'aimable*. The Caah contained only a mouldering piece of vellum, in all probability a copy of one of the gospels.

Another celebrated relic was the Caah or Corpna of the O'Briens. These portable shrines were

* Sir W. Betham is so learned in all that concerns Irish antiquities, that there could have been no difficulty whatever on his part, in guessing the contents of the Caah: such reliquaries were destined only to the one pious purpose.

devoted to the preservation of the holy volume, copies of which were formerly so precious and so rare in Ireland, that none but religious societies, or wealthy and noble families, could obtain them. Not only the gospels were difficult to be had, but persons sufficiently skilful in penmanship to copy them, could scarcely be found for any recompense. A learned clerk (Fra Dominick) engaged for this purpose by St. Cronan, refused to write longer than one day, from sun-rise to sun-set. In all times "*les grands talens se font prier.*"* St. Cronan, who "was Yorkshire too," closed with the agreement, having previously made a clandestine arrangement with the sun to shine uninterruptedly for forty days; and the copyist, outwitted by the saint, was obliged to hold by his bargain. This, I believe, is the identical missal sent, in the superb Caah, as a donation to the Irish monastery at Ratisbon, by Tirdellagh O'Brien, King of Munster.

The gospel, thus sumptuously enshrined, was first enclosed in a case of the most durable wood, generally of yew or oak, which, in time, became as sacred as the holy deposite. It was then placed in a box of copper (the Caah) plated with silver or gold, embossed with precious stones and crystals, and covered with effigies of saints, angels, and scriptural devices. They were also marked with some inscription, such as on the Caah of the O'Briens, which, as well as I remember, ran thus:—"Thady O'Brien caused me to be gilt; the Prince of Hy—, coadjutor of the Bishop, lately restored me; and Shaneen, the artist, decorated me."

The relics of antique times are always precious. They are the monuments of the barbarity, ignorance.

* "Great talents require pressing."

and duperly, from which knowledge, by its powerful agent, the printing-press, is so slowly redeeming us. Philosophy, no less than antiquarian research, is deeply interested in their conservation.

THE CADENAS.

As a set-off against my barbarous Irish reliquary, the French *cadenas*, used at the royal table, in the Tuileries, upon occasions of grand ceremony, is worth quoting. It is the *couvert* reserved expressly for the king, containing his salt-seller, cruets, plates, glasses, &c. &c., locked up under a *cadenas*, or padlock. Having had the honour to be present at the wedding-dinner (or supper) of the Duke de Berri, I made some inquiries, of an ultra friend who sat near me, as to this coffer, which was carried to the head of the table. "Tis an old custom," she said, "and, in its origin, a precaution against poison." "What, in the good old times?" I said. She shrugged, and replied by the unanswerable "*Que spulez-vous ? les méchants sont de tous les tems !*"*

* "What would you have? There are scoundrels in all times."

TOFINO.

I WAS one day walking on the Piazza del Duomo, at Milan, with the Abbate Breme,* when, passing near one of the lateral gates of the vice-regal palace, on our way to the post-office, he stopped, and patted a little dog on the head, which lay basking in the sun beside the sentry-box of the guard. He said, "You must know Tofino—his story is a romance—

"Credo che il senta ogni gentil persona."

While the Abbate was speaking and caressing Tofino, who seemed to know him, and returned his caresses, several passengers, as they hurried on, either gave their *buon giorno* to the dog, or added a sympathizing *buona bestia!*—*povera bestia!* and some flung him a biscuit or other eatable. All noticed him.

"Tofino," said Signor Breme, "is the most popular personage in all Lombardy. His merit is the only point upon which we all agree. Classicists

* Monseigneur Luize de Breme, ex-grand almoner of Italy, and son to the minister of the interior, (of Sardinia), was one of those European characters, whom to name is to recall to the memory of all the most distinguished strangers who visited Milan. Eminently amiable and accomplished, he was a liberal patron of Italian literature, in all its branches; and he was at the head of the school of romanticism in Milan. He was the dear friend of Madame de Staël and her family, and of Monti, the poet, and he was intimately known to Lord Byron, Ugo Foscolo, and to most of the celebrated persons of Europe, whose opinions and writings favoured his peculiar sect in literature.

and romanticists, liberals and illiberals, alike accord their suffrages, and contribute their quota to the comforts of this *ancien militaire*. Tofino has made the terrible campaign of Russia, with equal honour to himself and fidelity to his master. He is a miracle of canine affection and intelligence !

“ A dragoon in the Italian army having reared him from a puppy, and taught him many ingenious tricks, was called off with his regiment to Spain. The dragoon had a dear friend, a sergeant in the *guardia reale* ; and, in the *presentiment* that he should never return, he bequeathed Tofino, with the old proverb, which is to be found in all languages—“ As you love me, love my dog !”

“ The guardsman took the bequest, as a matter of sentiment, became attached to the dog, and, in return, inspired Tofino with the most intelligent attachment : he went on his messages, kept sentry with him at the palace gate, and gave his possessor a sort of celebrity as *il padrone di Tofino*. The moment arrived when the Imperial Guard, with the Prince Eugene at its head, were called to join the fatal expedition to Russia. The sergeant and Tofino marched off together from the sunny plains of their native Lombardy, for the snowy deserts of Moscow. Tofino weathered out all the fatigues and dangers of that most fearful campaign—still beside his master in the march, in the battle, swimming with him across the icy fords, or following him through the smoking ruins of burnt villages. Tofino’s master at last fell a victim, with nearly the whole of that splendid and gallant Italian legion, to whose valour and fidelity Buonaparte gave his testimony to the last hour of his life. The sergeant of the Imperial Guard, in the awful retreat from Moscow, was seen, for the last time, by one of his com-

rades and townsmen, sinking, after the passage of the Niemen, near a frozen torrent, which he had passed with his dog. There he was left expiring; and as he was never heard of afterward, there he probably died, with none to watch over his last agonies—but Tofino!

“Long after the campaign of Russia was terminated, the neighbours of the *Piazza del Duomo*, when speaking of that disastrous event, which left the bones of so many of their gallant compatriots to whiten on the Russian soil, would still recall the fidelity of Tofino, whose last act of affection had been related by a surviving spectator.

“One day, however, a wretched little animal was seen prowling about the *Palazzo Reale*, whose moans attracted general attention, and who, at last, laid himself down before the sentry-box at the lateral gate, to the left of the palace, from which to this period (now five years) he has never stirred. It was Tofino!—and neither force, nor caresses, nor the inclemency of the most inclement season, have proved sufficient to induce him to quit the spot where his master last did duty before the expedition, and where the sympathy of his master’s military brethren, and of the inhabitants of the quarter of the *Piazza del Duomo*, have raised him this little *casino*, and daily provide for his wants and his comforts. The Milanese come from all parts to pay an occasional visit to Tofino, and to honour, in this faithful animal, that virtuous instinct of *elective affection* which Nature reproduces, under so many forms, throughout her system of universal love and beneficence!”

RELIGIONS.

ANY fool, who will attack a false religion, by opposing to it another as absurd as itself, will make converts and establish a sect. But he who opposes superstition by the demonstration of its contradictions, will excite universal abhorrence, and will hardly escape stoning.

Lucian, in his life of Alexander, the false prophet, relates that this mountebank prophesied at once against the Christians and against the Epicureans of Pontus, as being in a common hostility against himself and his pretensions. In a similar spirit, certain writers of our own times accuse the reformed religion of atheism, or a tendency towards it. Gifford called every one atheist, in his *Quarterly Review*, whom he wanted to bring into disrepute. If, therefore, I were to define atheism, I should call it, the state of differing from any received mode of thinking in matters of religion, or in any thing else, where money or money's worth is concerned. The Epicureans and Christians of Pontus must have been a good deal surprised to find themselves in the same category; and so, too, would many of Mr. Gifford's atheists.

TOWER OF BABEL.

THOSE who have a taste for allegorizing the Bible, may probably consider the builders of Babel as a set of disputatious metaphysicians, scaling Heaven by their inquiries into matter and spirit. Their punishment gives consistence to the fancy; since nothing could foil them so much as a confusion of language: as is proved by their descendants, who have been squabbling about words (mistaken for things) even down to the present day.

MATHEMATICAL LADIES.

I CAN perfectly understand Lord Byron's antipathy to mathematical ladies. There is nothing in the study of numbers analogous to female intellect, which is essentially imaginative. Female mathematicians are seldom what the French call *aimables*. In the middle of the last century, Newton's sublime discoveries rendered mathematics fashionable; and fashion will reconcile a French lady even to the mathematics. "*La belle Emilie*" of Voltaire, and Madame Ferrand, the friend and mistress of Condillac, are two of the most notable instances. The former translated and commented on Newton in the intervals of the gaming-table and the toilet; and the latter wrote a considerable part of the "*Traité*

des Sensations," the well-known work of her philosophical lover. These, however, were exceptions, produced by the influence of the times. The exact sciences are not made for woman. Her feelings are too petulant for cool, temperate calculation, in which fancy and sensibility go for nothing at all. When Nature, in her caprice, produces a Bolognese doctress, really learned in such matters, the woman is sure to suffer by it.

The cleverest women are accused (and with some reason,) of inaccuracy in their thoughts; but the defect does not arise (as some have imagined) from the want of the discipline of a course of mathematics. Madame de Staël was sometimes inconsequential in her reasoning; but neither she, nor many other female and non-mathematical writers of less power, have fallen into such "bald and disjointed" twaddle as is to be found in the pamphlets of some of our university polemics and politicians. "The high men," as I am told they are called at Cambridge and Oxford, do not usually become the most distinguished statesmen and philosophers.

I suspect, therefore, that the current admiration for the mathematics, as an instrument of mental discipline, arises much more from the *safety* of such pursuits, and their disconnexion with moral and political interests, than from the rigor and exactness of their methods of argumentation. At the end of a five years' college course, the student is not more likely to question established abuses, than if he had spent the time in playing shuttlecock. His moral faculties have been kept perfectly quiescent. Indignation at public and private wrong, contempt for falsehood and dishonesty, the kindling glow of approbation at patriotic self-sacrifice, have remained unawakened and cold. The pursuit of abstractions

has shut out all interest or feeling for realities; and the university whippers-in have trained the young bound quite away from the pursuit of forbidden truths.

A mere mathematician is the fittest raw material for manufacturing a passive-obedience parson, or an all-confiding country gentleman. Placed in the foreground of the world's great scene of action, the most accomplished of the class is but on a par with a mere land-surveyor; he can estimate quantities, and nothing more. With the sole exception of the inventors, (who, as in the other branches of knowledge, must be superior persons,) the greatest proficient in the mathematics are often the dullest and least apprehensive of men; and as they mistake the superiority of their scientific methods, for their own aptitude to discover truth, they are the most presumptuous. These are the persons who sneer at lady writers, and imagine that there is no road to common sense and common observation, but over the Ass's Bridge.

Of mathematics, as a means to an end, as the handmaid to the natural sciences, it would be absurd to speak slightly; but as a mere discipline, I fancy I am not singular in doubting their efficacy; and I am certain that, for the female mind in particular, they can do little beyond encouraging pedantry; while they blunt that rapid intuition which serves a woman better than reason, and gives to superior females the influence they have so often possessed on public affairs. In literature, more especially, it is this intuition, this promptitude to feel, rather than to analyze the truth, that has given not only their charm, but, I will add, their utility, to female writers. If they were more exact, they would be less striking. Their especial service is to keep alive the fervour of

enthusiasm, and to avert the calculating selfishness which is the besetting sin of advanced civilization. One day, complaining to a celebrated Irish wit of the faults of my early works, he replied, "Let them alone, child; it is to your faults you owe your success."

CARDINAL GONSALVI.

"Le joli rendez-vous qu'il m'a donné."

MADAME DE MAINTENON.

MAIS! *quel rendez-vous!* Doctrine of possibilities,—whoever should have predicted to me such an appointment some years back, when I was paddling about the bogs, and knocks, and sliuus of the barony of Tireragh, and thinking Father Flynn, of Colooney (the Father John, *par parenthèse*, of my "Wild Irish Girl"), the greatest hierarch of the Catholic church extant—*whoever, "then and there,"* should have predicted to me that I should have given *rendez-vous* to an *eminenza*—a cardinal secretary—"a prince of the Roman church,"—one who governed *him*, whose predecessors governed the world—I should have believed the prediction just as much as the Brewer's Tub-woman, who married Lawyer Hyde, would have believed the man who might have prophesied her becoming the mother of a Dutchess of York, and the grandmother of two queens of England! And where did I give this notable *rendez-vous?*—"Je vous le donne en une—je vous le donne en quatre," as Madame de Sévigné says, in setting her daughter to guess who Mademoiselle was going to marry.—Why.

in the church of the Quirinal, at Rome, and at the Cardinal's request! *Pardi*, my cardinal was none of your ordinary cardinals—none of your Cardinals, who “come with a whoop and come with a call,” and take a cover at your table, and fill your little anti-room with *la famiglia*,* in tarnished liveries and coloured cotton neck-kerchiefs, smelling of the ends of candles, which smoke out of their fusty coat-pockets, and giving, very literally, a *mauvais odeur* to the whole apartment.

The Cardinal, *par excellence*, the Cardinal Gonsalvi, was of another *étouffe*! Sunday after Sunday I had been gazing in awe on his terrible eyes, as they flashed on the whole Conclave, at the head of which he sat in the Pope's Chapel. There was something superhuman in those eyes!—something.

“That o'er-inform'd their tenement of clay.”

They are now beaming full on me from his most singular portrait, which, among a collection of singular portraits, and placed, as it is, between the original pictures of Alfieri and Byron, extinguishes all that surround it. They would do equally well in a personification of love or murder. Their master-expression was intense passion; but passion directed, not subdued, by craft.

I had heard a great deal of Gonsalvi in France, where he had resided much, and was well known. Talking him over with Denon, the night before we left Paris for Italy, he sketched off his character with his usual *finesse* of touch and accuracy of drawing—“*Grand politique, et un peu libertin; d'ailleurs,*

* The household of the great families and cardinals of Rome are called *la famiglia*, or the family. A cardinal never drives or walks out, or pays a visit, without a train of liveried servants.

homme très-aimable, et tant soit peu dangereux."* Like all men of the temperament which goes to the highest order of genius, the Cardinal Gonsalvi was essentially liberal. What is called liberality is so purely the power of seeing clearly, and judging sagaciously, concerning the actual state of society—its wants, and its means—that able men must be liberal men, sooner or later. The ablest will not wait for the pressure of exigencies. There is something in the nerve, and sinew, and circulation of a man of genius, that forces him on with the age, and leaves him no power of election. Whenever the impulse is crossed or diverted by some private interest, some personal ambition, or individual view, his great career is checked. The "*En avant!*" of General Buonaparte was the true star of his glory—the return, the retrogradation to old systems and old forms, was the destruction of the emperor! His alliance with the Gothic fabric of Hapsburg was the fatal conjunction that mouldered his new raised fortunes to the dust. It was the baneful influence of the same *incubus* of illiberality and despotism which turned Gonsalvi from *his* high destiny, and made him a dependant, when he should have been a leader. Still, before he caught a view of the papal throne, through the power of Austrian agency, he was so open, so bold in his expression of liberal opinions, not only in temporal but spiritual concerns, that he was suspected of being a member of some of those secret societies which, (like the secret tribunal of old,) made even power tremble in its strongest fortress. By some, he was called the *Cardinal Carbonaro*; and *il giacobino* and *il radicale* were names publicly bestowed on one who soon

* "A great politician, and something of a libertine,—for the rest, an amiable man, but perhaps a little dangerous." .

silenced all imputations, by permitting the dungeons of the Papal State to be filled with the victims of that terrible political reaction, which followed close upon the *restoration* effected by the Holy Alliance.

Gonsalvi was, however, eminently superior to the time and persons under whose influence and power he acted; and his private agency and personal feelings were in perpetual opposition to the public part which, as first minister to Pope Pius the Seventh, he was obliged to act. Had he flourished in remoter times, he would have made a splendid Pope!—a something between Leo the Tenth and Ganganelli—showy, sumptuous and gallant as the first—lettered, liberal, and astute as the latter. As it was, he was chained to the fortunes of his friend, the reigning pontiff—involved in a sort of inevitable dependence upon the dull despotism of Austria, and always *en butte* to the intrigues of the illiberal, and to the bigotry of the conclave. Thus circumstanced, he had a part of infinite difficulty to perform. Had he been honest, he would have thrown it up; but he was a churchman, and, in his spiritual ambition, *prêtre avant tout*. Still, so little did Gonsalvi participate in the *cagoterie* of his class or order—so little was he bound by prejudice or predilection to the ordinances of the church, that (like the archbishop of Taranto) he was opposed to the celibacy of the priesthood; and he suggested to Buonaparte, that should the French government demand the liberty of marriage for the ministers of the Gallican church the court of Rome would not make any objection—“*Parce que*” (to use his own words) “*ce n’était qu’un point de discipline.*”* Buonaparte agreed with him on the advantage of such an innovation; and said that

* “Because it was but a point of discipline.”

if he did not urge the point, it was simply because he would not give the *collets-montés* of the Faubourg St. Germain a pretence for calling the pope a heretic. The proposition and the rejoinder were curious and characteristic. Here, then, was a cardinal out of the "common roll" of cardinals; and I went to Rome, desirous, but hopeless, of knowing him: for it was reported that he had ceased to hold assemblies, or to go to them, and that he was living in official retirement. So I consoled myself with Cardinal Fesch, who was all good humour and good nature; and who allowed me to rummage about his most interesting palace, and admire his gallery and his pontifical toilette—his pictures by Raphael, and his point-laces, enough to make the mouths of Empresses water.

One fine Roman winter morning—(they very much resemble a summer's day in Ireland)—the Dutchess of Devonshire called on me, and, *sans préambule*, announced the Cardinal Gonsalvi's desire to make my acquaintance: but, though the dutchess did not say as much, I saw there was some little difficulty about the where and the how of this introduction. The cardinal was a minister of state, and I was ("audacious little worm!") the author of "France!" It was, therefore, rather a delicate matter for him to give me *rendez-vous* any where on this side the Styx. The Dutchess, however, said she would let me know on the following day; and I received the following note, in answer to one I had sent as an inscription on a Roman brick, which I found in the well-known excavation, made by her grace round the column Phocas:—

"MY DEAR MADAM,
"I am not an Irishwoman; but I admire Irish

talent and imagination, and we are certainly indebted to you for enabling us to judge of them. I return the stone or brick, with all the rights that I might have to it, and am flattered by the inscription.* I also send you the edition of the Fifth Satire of Horace, and am truly gratified by your praise of it. If you will go to the Quirinal chapel on Thursday, I shall have an opportunity of presenting you to Cardinal Gonsalvi. I shall go about eleven.

“Pray believe me very much yours,

“ELIZABETH DEVONSHIRE.”

“If you wish to go to the chapel to-morrow, (Thursday,) I will call for you a little before eleven, and for Sir Charles also. If the Cardinal stops to speak to me, I shall present you, &c. &c.”

I forget what was the *grande cérémonie* celebrated on the above-mentioned day at the Quirinal; but it was one of singular magnificence. The Dutchess of Devonshire had the privilege of places devoted to the families of the Cardinals, and we commanded a full view of that splendid church, which, like the Temple of the Sun, whose site it occupies, was all light, lustre, and effulgence. The central nave was thronged with the dignitaries of the church, in grand costume, abbots, priors, and monsignori—

“Black spirits and white, blue spirits and gray.”

The tribunes were filled with representatives of the beauty and fashion of Europe, from the Niemen to the Thames. The pope was on his throne; the conclave sat beneath him, in vestments of eastern

* A few lines written by the author, who had supposed the daughter of the Bishop of Derry to have been an Irishwoman.

plitude and splendour; while at their feet were ranged their humble *caudatori*. The pope pontificated; and when the censers had flung their odours on the air, and the loud hosannas had ceased to peal, a procession began, which was one of the most imposing I ever beheld. The pope, borne aloft on his moveable throne, and on the necks of his servants, appeared like some idol of pagan worship. The members of the conclave, two by two, followed; their trains of violet velvet, held up by the *caudatori*. The whole spectacle passed on, and half way down the great vestibule which precedes the chapel, disappeared among its lofty and massive columns. The Cardinal Secretary then broke off from the line of march, and joined us, as we stood under the shadow of a pillar.

The presentation was as unceremonious, as the conversation which ensued was pleasant, easy, and *spirituel*. We talked of France, and the persons we mutually knew there; and I saw that there was a playful attempt to draw me out on the subject of Rome and the actual order of things in Italy, more flattering than fair, and which I parried as well as I could. Before we parted, he proposed, with great politeness, calling on us the following day; but, as we were lodged (as were many of our betters) *au vingt-cinquième*, I declined the honour till after our return from Naples.

Cardinal Gonsalvi conversed in French like a Parisian, and his phrases were epigrammatic and well turned. As we stood in the partial shadow of one of the great columns, with some streaks of bright light falling from a high window on the rich robes and diamond buckles of his eminence, I was struck by the oddity of the group. The fine figure and countenance, and magnificent costume of the

Roman Cardinal,—the sybil air and look of the British peeress, whose tall, slight form, wrapped in a black velvet mantle, surmounted by a black hat, and one sweeping feather, such as Rubens would have delighted to copy,—and my own “Little Red-riding-hood” appearance (as Irish as if I had never left the banks of the Liffey)—and again, the true impersonation of all that is most English in physiognomy and *tournaure* in my English husband—it was a picture to fill the canvass of a Callot or a Caravaggio! What was most odd in all this, was the conjunction of personages so apparently incongruous. This could not have happened fifty years back. What effected it now? The “march of intellect” with its seven-league boots, like those of the Marquis of Carabas! O chone! a little wild Irish woman to march from the banks of the Bog of Allan, to hold a colloquy sublime on the banks of the Tiber, on the *Mons Quirinalis*, with a Roman Cardinal.—That is a march with a vengeance!

FRENCH POETRY.

“EVERY body,” says sturdy Johnson, “has a right to say what he likes, and every body has a right to knock him down for it;”—a canon of criticism, of which the disputants of our days have not been slow to avail themselves. As far, at least, as a virtual and constructive knock-down blow is concerned, it is the favourite syllogism of reviewers, pamphleteers, and parliamentary orators. For my own part, I have always said what I liked, and I have been knocked down for it pretty often from

Pontius to Pilate ; that is, from Gifford to Croly. I am rather popular, I flatter myself, in France ; and yet the French have never pardoned my skepticism with respect to the unrivalled poetical merits of Racine ; and they have not always sparred with the gloves on, in their application of the Johnsonian maxim to my case. Still I say, that Racine is no poet, according to our northern ideas of poetry. The French are too apt to mistake rhymes and rhetoric for poetry. A French gentleman, in speaking of a young Parisian Sappho, said to me, the other day, "*Elle fait des vers comme un ange !*"* Making verses, however, is not writing poetry ; and the very phraseology demonstrates a rooted difference in the ideas of the two nations on the subject.

Generally speaking, French poetry is but metrical prose. Stripped of its rhymes, and released from the ties of measure, there is little in it of that imagery, in which we imagine poetry to consist. I should say, in my ignorance, that Beranger is the truest living poet of his country. His writings are in character with the genius, and language, and temperament of his nation, which is essentially witty, intellectual, full of philosophy and thought ; and I would rather have written one verse of one of his delightful patriotic songs, than a whole volume of *Henriades* and *Jardins*.

It is no bad compliment to a nation, to say that it is not poetical. The finest poets have flourished in the most barbarous times. When the people know nothing, they are thrown upon the exaggerations of fancy ; and the poverty of a language is among the most pregnant occasions of poetical diction. Homer, Hesiod, David, Ossian, Dante, Chaucer, are

* "She makes verses like an angel."

among the greatest poets extant; yet, in what times did they write! The structure of the French language, also, with its mute vowels, surrounds the mere fabric of verse with such difficulties, as are only to be conquered by a laborious study. The nation, therefore, is more struck by the merit of style, than of matter; and the habits of the Parisians are so alien from all acquaintance with nature—so tied down to conventional notions and feelings, that a Schiller or a Shakspeare would not be understood by them. Above all, the dread of ridicule, the predominant vice of the French *morale*, effectually prevents an indulgence in those *élans* of sentiment, without which genuine poetry, in the English sense of the word, cannot exist. The fact is, that the standard of excellence is not the same in London and Paris; and international criticism is pretty much the dispute of the two knights, respecting the colour of the shield, of which they did not see the same side.

IDLENESS OF GENIUS.

I SAID, not long since, to Mr. ***, "Nobody tolerates, or even likes, a thorough-going, genuine, conscious coxcomb, more than I do—one who has taken up the profession coolly and deliberately, like the Brummels, &c. &c. of old. But I cannot stand your friend: he is such a dull dandy, and nothing but a dandy."

"No, I assure you," was the reply; "he is by no means deficient. He has, on the contrary, considerable talent; but he is so indolent. How often do

you see great talent rendered inefficient by indolence!"

"Yes, you do," I said; "it is a pity." But, suddenly struck with the absurdity, I observed, "What nonsense we are talking. One goes on for ever repeating common places, without reflection. You know, as well as I do, that great talents and indolence are physically incompatible. Vitality, or all-aliveness—energy, activity, are the great elements of what we call talents."

The idleness of genius is a mere *platitudo*. Bacon, Shakspeare, Milton, Voltaire, Newton, all who have enlightened and benefitted the world, have been no less remarkable for their labour, than for their genius. Physical activity may exist without mind; but the man of talent cannot be idle, even though he desire it; he is mastered by his moral energy, and pushed into activity, whether he will or not. I know not a better instance of the industry and energy of talent, than my friend Shiel. A leader of the great national army of the disqualified, and obliged to a perpetual study and practice of the tactics of defence and offence—a lawyer of considerable business—an orator, standing alone, not only in his own country, where so many are eloquent, but in his age and in Europe—a dramatic writer, long ranked among the first of his day,—he adds to these sources of occupation, which are not sufficient to exhaust his unwearied industry, his frequent contributions to the *New Monthly Magazine*—those brilliant and fanciful sketches, which, though thrown out in moments of relaxation, are, for graphic delineation and picturesque colouring, equal to the best pages, which have made the reputation of Sir W. Scott.

Then again, there is O'Connell, the head and front

of all agitation, moral, political, social, and legal. When we read in the papers those eloquent and powerful speeches, in which the spectres of Ireland's oppression are called up from the depths of history, with a perfect knowledge of all that has concerned the country from its earliest records, and in which unnumbered "modern instances" of misrule, in all its shades of ignorance and venality, are collected from the storehouse of his capacious memory,—those speeches in which, amidst the fiery explosions of long nurtured indignation, (the petulant outpourings of constitutional impatience,) arguments of logical conviction, and facts of curious detail, come forth, as from an exhaustless fountain,—who but would suppose that the life of the patriot, demagogue, and agitator, was occupied exclusively in the one great and absorbing cause? It is, however, on his way home from the courts, and after legal labours, that have occupied him from the dawn of light, that, (as if to escape from the homage which haunts his steps) he turns into the Catholic Association—it is after having set a jury-box in a roar by his humour, made "butchers weep" by his pathos, driven a witness to the last shift of Irish evasion, and puzzled a judge by some point of law, not dreamed of in his philosophy, that, all weary and exhausted as he must be, he mounts the rostrum of the Corn Exchange, the *Jupiter Tonans* of the Catholic senate; and, by those thunderbolts of eloquence, so much more effective to hear than to read, kindles the lambent light of patriotism to its fiercest glow, and with "fear of change perplexes" Brunswick clubs and Orange lodges.*

* *Insigne mœstis præsidium reis,
Et consulenti, Pollio, curiæ.*

HORAT. 1, 2, Ode 1.

Again, this boldest of demagogues, this mildest of men, "from Dan to Beersheba," appears in the patriarchal light of the happy father of a happy family, practising all the social duties, and nourishing all the social affections. It is remarkable, that Mr. O'Connell is not only governed by the same sense of the value of time as influenced Sir Edward Coke, but literally obeys his injunctions for its partition, which forms the creed more than the practice of rising young lawyers. It is this intense and laborious diligence in his profession, that has won him the public confidence. Where his abilities as a lawyer may be serviceable, party yields to self-interest: and many an inveterate ascendancy man leaves his friends, the Orange barristers, to hawk their empty bags through the courts, while he contributes his official gains indirectly to the Catholic rent, by assigning to Catholic talent the cause which Catholic eloquence can best defend.

Then, as we are on the subject of the association, there is another of its distinguished members, Thomas Wyse, an antiquarian, linguist, traveller, artist, scholar, painter, and author, no less than an orator and a politician. What industry, what application, what energy must have gone to make up all this acquirement! In a careless and desultory conversation, Mr. Wyse will throw out as much, and as varied knowledge, as would qualify some noble pedant for the chair of what Horace Walpole calls "the old ladies' society." Without the aptitude for labour, nothing great ever was or ever will be produced. Poets talk of inspiration; but their finest passages are uniformly the result of the deepest study. Even Sheridan, the man of eminence most quoted for his idleness, has left proofs behind him of the intensity of the effort by which his inimitable

comedies were elaborated; and his biographer and countryman might bear his own personal evidence to the great truth, that not even the slightest and most sparkling effusions of the muse, are emancipated from this great governing law of excellence. The supposition of amazing talents, latent in the capabilities of indolent triflers, is like the theory of those elaborate and ingenious machines for producing perpetual motion, which are extremely surprising and admirable, but which labour under a small practical disadvantage, that—they do not perform.

FRANKNESS.

Nothing wins on the affections more than that frank and generous disposition which, ever ready to risk itself for others, may excite the derision of the crafty and designing, but has an unfailing advocate in the self-love of society. The manœvrer, male or female, may deceive for a time—obtain admirers by a plausible exterior, make dupes, and secure dependants; but such persons win no friends, excite no confidence. The cold and crafty Octavius, with all his power, had no devoted intimates of the heart; while Cesar, with all his crimes, and Antony, with all his vices, won, by their generous and unreserved dispositions, the affections of all who approached them. He who in his patriotism had said, that “he could neither be false to the republic nor survive it,”*

* “*Nam neque deesse, neque superesse reipublicæ volo.*”

was yet devoted to Cesar, whose captivating affability and generous temper were irresistible; and many a stern republican relaxing his severity, and, surrendering his feelings to Antony, suffered the sophistry of the affections to master the graver impressions of patriotism.

“ Mark Antony I served, who best was worthy
Best to be served; while he stood up and spoke,
He was my master, and I wore a life
To spend upon his hater.”

The two great captains of antiquity seem to have possessed singular arts of fascination; while of the two great captains of modern times, one only excelled in that species of *bonhomie*, which lays contributions on the hearts of the multitude, often dangerous to their rights and happiness. Napoleon Buonaparte—stern at the Tuileries, where he was surrounded by those whom he knew to be despicable, and whom he had proved to be corrupt—when in the midst of his soldiers, gave a full, free scope to his frank and *brusque* cordiality. The idol of his troops, had he trusted to their affection and their fealty, he would not have fallen a victim to the treachery of that false *grade*, which he himself had the folly to create, and which contributed as mainly to his destruction, as the diplomacy of foreign cabinets, and the force of foreign bayonets.

The craft of the manœuvrer lies essentially in the narrowness of his faculties. It is rarely that a cold and selfish heart is accompanied by extensive views, and an enlarged intellect. The manœuvrer, engrossed by the cunning of detail, has no thought for the wisdom of the complex; his scope is a succession of paltry temporary objects, each of which, in its turn, absorbs his whole attention, and is pursued

without reference to its relative importance, or to the influence which the means employed in its attainment may have on the future. He sacrifices character to win some dishonest trifle, and parts with a friend on the slightest expediency. Conscious, too, of the artifice of his combinations, and the falsehood of his pretences, he cannot inspire a conviction that he does not feel; and the caution and circumspection which attend all his movements, becoming infectious, inspire an instinctive suspicion in the minds on which he operates.

For this reason, the mere diplomatist makes the worst of ministers. The "finessing and trick," which are the soul of his enterprises, serve but to isolate him, and never carry the public along with them. Whereas the bold, the generous, the uncalculating, and, it may be, the imprudent statesman, communicates the fire of his own volition to those around him, and seizes with an irresistible impulse, the sympathies of the people.

By the simple enchantment of a constitutional frankness, and an innate veracity, the Marquis of Anglesea, in eight short months, unmarked by any decided ministerial measure, unconsciously captivated a nation's love. With

"A soul as sure to charm as seen,"

which

"Boldly steps forth, nor keeps a thought within,"

he impressed upon public opinion a conviction, which nothing could shake, of the honesty of his purpose. His word, like truth, carried its evidence along with it. The fiercest passions were calmed at

his bidding; and the swelling waters of political agitation subsided, even while the winds were yet raging that had lashed them into fury.

MANŒUVRERS.

ON the subject of a *female manoeuvrer* whole volumes might be written, for woman goes so much more into detail than man. One or two samples present themselves at this moment, in the list of my own acquaintance, which leave even Miss Edgeworth's admirable portrait far behind. These creatures, not only in their most trivial actions, "*pèsent l'apparent, le douteux, et le possible;*" but, by the very depth and intricacy of their calculations, their "*politiques aux choux et aux raves,*" defeat the purpose they wish to effect, by the means they take to accomplish it. I have one of these *manœuvriers* at present before me;—here she goes!—But, here is a bill of fare to write, and though character will keep cool—cooks won't. So "*revenons à notre mouton.*" It is quite horrible how housekeeping crosses authorship. What fame may I not have forfeited, by getting up a dinner instead of a book!

WONDERFUL CHILDREN, AND GOOD MOTHERS.

“ So wise, so young, they say do ne'er live long.”

Richard III.

It is a curious fact, that in the present times we have none of those precocose prodigies, so numerous in the olden time. It seems to have been one of the peculiar privileges of the wisdom of our ancestors, to produce those infant miracles of learning and science, the “admirable Crichtons” of the nursery, who studied in cradles, and lectured from go-carts, “I was not” (says the quaint, but most amusing Mr. Evelyn,) “initiated into any rudiments, *till* I was *four* years old; and then, one Friar taught us, at the church door of Wotton!” This “*till I was four years old,*” marks his conviction of his own backwardness, in comparing himself with other children of his age, and times; but it was more particularly in reference to the superior wit, talent, and learning of his own son, at that early period of his brief existence, who was, to use his afflicted father’s words, a “prodigy for wit and understanding.” A prodigy, indeed! for, “at two years and a half old, he could perfectly read any of the English, French, Latin, and Gothic characters, pronouncing the three first languages exactly,” &c. &c.

The termination of this most short, splendid, and unnatural career is worth making:—“He dieth,” (says Evelyn) “at five years, after six fits of quartan ague, with which it pleased God to visit him; though, in my opinion, he was suffocated by the

women and maids who tended him, and covered him too hot with blankets, as he lay in a cradle, near an *excessive hot fire*, (in a quartan fever!)—I suffered him to be opened, when they found he was what is vulgarly called, livergrown!" What a picture!—what a history of the times, the state of science, and the wisdom of our ancestors! In the first instance, the attributing an infliction to the divine visitation, which was at the same time assignable to vulgar nursery maids, and hot blankets. In the next, the vain father not perceiving that the genius of his child was but disease, and his supernatural intelligence only the unnatural developement of faculties, most probably produced by mal-organization, which the style of his rearing and education was so calculated to confirm. "Before his fifth year, he had not only skill to read most written hands, but to decline all nouns, conjugate the verbs, regular and irregular, learned out "Puerilis," got by heart almost the entire vocabulary of Latin and French primitives, could make congruous syntax, turn English into Latin, construe and prove what he had read, knew the government and use of relatives, verbs, substantives, ellipses, and many figures and tropes, and made a considerable progress in Comenius's "Janua," and had a strong passion for Greek."

This is too frightful—it makes one shudder to transcribe it. Such, however, was the education, by which an accomplished and really knowing parent, (knowing for the age in which he lived,) hesitated not to hurry his wonderful child to an untimely grave.

Such, however, were the times, when learning was dearly prized, and knowledge little diffused; when monastic universities, founded by the church, through the influence of its royal and noble depend-

ants, were the sole depositaries of the little that was known, worth the labour of acquiring; and when the most learned of the community had less solid practical information, than the operative mechanics of the present day. Such were the times when plague, pestilence, and famine, were events of ordinary occurrence; when corruption in morals, and baseness in politics flourished, even to the extent of surrounding a king at the altar of his God, with the ministers of his vices; and converting the "brightest," and the "wisest," into the worst and meanest of mankind. These were the times of the most brutal ignorance in the people, and the greatest profligacy in the nobility; and, these were the times that produced such learned little prodigies as young Evelyn, under a system of education calculated to make such prodigies; but not to form citizens for a free state, nor legislators for a great nation.

Whatever may have been the natural abilities of this poor child, to have made such a progress in the learned languages, at five years old, he must have been the object and victim of a very laborious system of study, all applied to the exercise of his memory. He must therefore have submitted to close confinement in warm rooms, to the privation of air and exercise, and to a sedentary and cramped position; and he was probably much injured by the gross habit of eating, and the want of personal purity, so remarkable in an age, when meat was devoured three or four times a day, even by the most dainty, and when general ablutions were resorted to, more as a remedy than a daily habit.

The overworking of the brain at the expense of all the other functions, must also have had a fatal effect even on children of robust temperaments; and the Indian practice of flinging their offspring into

the sea, to sink or swim, as strength or feebleness decided, was humanity and civilization, to the system pursued in times quoted with such approbation—a system by which infant intelligence was tortured into intellectual precocity, and hurried to an early tomb, under the precipitating concurrences of “maids, women, hot blankets, and excessive hot fires.”

What is most notable in all this is, that Mr. Evelyn, the father of the unfortunate infant, was one of the cleverest and most advanced men of his time, and much celebrated for his translation of, and his essay prefixed to, the “*Golden Book*” of St. Chrysostom, “*concerning the Education of Children.*”

But if Mr. Evelyn was misled by “all the vulgar errors of the wise,” where was the mother’s instinct? Alas, where a mother’s instincts often are, in her vanity and her weakness. Mrs. Evelyn was one of the most accomplished women of the Court of Charles the Second; and one of the few virtuous women who frequented it. She was a celebrated linguist and artist, and her works in oil and miniature are frequently quoted with pride by her husband. Yet she permitted disease to creep insidiously on the infancy of her child, while he was learning the Latin and Gothic characters, and giving to studies beyond his strength those hours which should have gone to air, exercise, and timely repose. Finally, she consigned him to the superintendence of her maids and women; and, worse than all, hurried on his death by surrounding him with circumstances calculated to produce it,—because that rational information necessary to all mothers, was not on the category of her acquirements. How many mothers, even in these march of intellect times, have stopped

short with Mrs. Evelyn; whose judgment should take the lead of the gratification of feeling and vanity?—and be it observed, that mothers in general mistake their own indulgence for their children's; and have quite as much pleasure in stuffing pounds of plum cake down the throats of their over-fed masters Gobbleton Mowbray, as the masters Gobbleton enjoy in its deglutition.

“The Temple of Nature is the heart of a mother,” says Kotzebue, in his sentimental jargon; but there are various temples; and Nature is a very capricious deity. What was she in the heart of Lady Macclesfield, and in a thousand other mothers, who have abandoned their children to want or infamy, or to neglect, and the influence of their own bad examples, whose results pursue their offspring through life?

The more or less powerful instinct of maternity is an affair of temperament, nurtured or modified by other instincts or passions, and by circumstances favourable or unfavourable to its existence. The bird that flies at the invader of its nest—the tigress that gathers its young under it, and darts its murderous glance at all who attempt to interfere with the objects of its affections, is more respectable than any one of these mothers “upon instinct,” who are only that. It is not the instinct, or feeling, but the judgment that directs it, which is laudable. Maternity is no abstraction; and when people say, “such a one is injudicious, or ignorant, or feeble, or shallow, but she is a good mother,” they talk nonsense. That which the woman is, the mother will be; and her personal qualities will direct and govern her maternal instinct, as her taste will influence her appetite. If she be prejudiced and ignorant, the *good mother* will mismanage her children; and if she be

violent in temper and vehement in opinion, the good mother will be petulant and unjust towards them : if she be inconsistent and capricious, she will alternate between fits of severity and bursts of indulgence, equally fatal : if she be vain, and coquetish, and selfish, she may be fond of her children through her pride, but she will always be ready to sacrifice their enjoyments, and even their interests, to the triumphs of her own vanity, or the gratification of her egotism.

The perfection of motherhood lies, therefore, in the harmonious blending of a happy instinct, with those qualities which make the good member of general society—with good sense and information—with subdued or regulated passions, and that abnegation, which lays every selfish consideration at the feet of duty. To make a good mother, it is not sufficient to seek the happiness of the child, but to seek it with foresight and effect. Her actions must be regulated by long-sighted views, and steadily and perseveringly directed to that health of the body and of the mind, which can alone enable the objects of her solicitude to meet the shocks and rubs of life with firmness, and to maintain that independence, in practice and principle, which sets the vicissitudes of fortune at defiance, fitting its possessor to fill the various stations, whether of wealth or poverty, of honour or obscurity, to which chance may conduct him.

This is my idea of the duties of maternity, and of the perfection of that most perfect creature, a good mother. I know it is not everybody's idea, and that there is another *beau idéal* of maternity, which is much more prevalent.

There is the good mother, that spends half her life in hugging, flattering, and stuffing her child, till

like the little Dalai Lama of Thibet, he thinks he has come into the world for no other purpose than to be adored like a god, and crammed like a capon. This is the good mother, who, in her fondness, is seen watching anxiously, after a long late dinner, for the entrance of the little victim which she has dressed up for sacrifice, and whose vigils are prolonged beyond its natural strength, that it may partake of the poisonous luxuries in the last service of the feast of ceremony, till the fever of over excitement mounts to its cheek, sparkles in the eye, and gives incoherency to its voluble nonsense; an excitement to be followed not by the deep and dreamless sleep of infancy, but by the restless slumbers and fearful visions of indigestion. Alas for the mother and for the child! and alas for the guests called upon for their quota of admiration upon such melancholy occasions, such terrible exhibitions of human vanity and human weakness, counteracting the finest instincts of human nature!

Clever and truth-telling Miss Edgeworth—you who have written such rational and charming books for children—why have you not written some *easy lessons* for their mothers? Why have you not composed a manual for their use, to teach them a few elementary facts in physics and in morals; and, above all, to teach them that nature, in all things, is the sole basis of right thinking and right acting, under all circumstances, and in all times? Did mothers know and feel this, what sorrows and disappointments might be spared to their hearts and their hopes, to their affections and their ambition; what time, now given to acquire arts, for which nature has refused the requisite organization, might be dedicated to health, and what lives might be spared, whose loss, (attributed sacri-

legiously to "the will of God,") has only been a sacrifice to "maids, women, hot blankets, excessive hot fires," and the ignorance, and prejudices, and selfish fondness of the "best of mothers."

TOYS AND TRINKETS.

"Parfaits dans le petit—sublimes en bijoux—
Grands inventeurs de riens, nous faisons des jaloux."
Voyage à Berlin.

I SHOULD like to know if the march of intellect has any thing to do with the indifference which the children of our day show for toys. The Mrs. Chevenixes, and the *petits Dunkerques* of modern times would be ruined and undone, if it were not for the papas and mammas, whose *boudoirs* and dressing-rooms are the only baby-houses to be found in modern mansions.

The witty, the gallant Marquis de Sévigné was called by his mother "*le roi des bagatelles*," from his love of *bijouterie*; and Lord —— might be called the emperor. His pipes and snuff-boxes alone might entitle him to the imperial grade in the sovereignty of trifles: while Lady —— is the very Catherine of Russia of trinkets, and autocrat of the toy-shop. There is not a useless utility, a superfluous superfluity, that ingenuity can devise for the amusement of idleness, which may not now be found on the tables of the great, and the imitators of their present rage for toys:—gold scissors that do not cut; silver

needles that do not sew ; pearl pen-knives that mend no pens ; and work-boxes that hold no work save clock-work ; *jagots* that never burn ; and *allumettes* that are never to be lighted : with a hundred devices in gems and jewels, which it must have taken some poetical talent, and more poetical fancy than goes to half the sonnets and "*lines*" that we read, or at least pay for, to invent.

All this seems very frivolous ; but then these "trifles light as air" are sometimes important enough in their results : for, if such fairy favours are occasionally bestowed by tributary friends, they are sometimes the insidious offerings of concealed admirers ; who tell in toys, what words dare not utter ; and give the history of a passion in a series of trinkets, which, if hearts of turquoise, and seals of emeralds could speak, would be found more than circumstantial evidences in Doctors' Commons.

That *petites-maitres*, and *petites-maitresses* should thus "trifle life away," and occupy their time and money like children, may not appear so very extraordinary ; but that literary women—intellectual women—women who affect to think, and presume to write—and publish too, and make head against such organs of opinion as Quarterly Reviews, and the like—that *they* should give themselves the airs of fashionable frivolity, and endeavour to reconcile "*les goûts d'un grand seigneur, et les revenus d'un poète,*" is really "too bad." It is, however, a fair example of the incongruities of character, and the influence of vogue. What would the Scuderies, and the Daciers, and the Carters, and the Montagus say to the toy-shop house of a certain forty-volume-power female writer of the present day, who, if she has not written as well, has written as much, as those three voluminous ladies combined ? What a disappointment

to blue-stocking visitors, who expect to find her in the midst of that charming literary litter, intellectual disorder, and elegant neglect of all the elegancies of ordinary life, which marked the *ménages* of the *femmes-savantes* of the late and preceding centuries! —the broken tea-cup (substituted for a wine glass) of Mary Wolstonecraft! or the Scotch mull and brown pocket-handkerchief of Catharine Maccauley!! What a shock to hear this quarto authoress talk of *esprit de rose* instead of *l'esprit des lois*; to find the atmosphere of her drawing-room perfumed by a *jardin* of fresh flowers, whose odour she pretends, has the same effect on her brain as sherries had upon Falstaff's, "driving thence all the dull and crudy vapours, which environ it!"

How their literary Fustinesses of former times would turn up their intellectual noses at the frivolous tastes of this new-light *Armande*, could they see her, as I see her at this moment, writing at a rose-wood *secrétaire*, accommodating and pliant as any *secrétaire* on the list of diplomacy, and "seizing," literally, not figuratively, (like Anna Matilda) her "golden quill." There she sits, surrounded by the inspiring semblance of deathless wits and immortal beauties, shining from enamels durable as their fame—by bookcases, that glitter in gilt vellum and rosy Russian—with Dante illustrated on Sevre vases, and the loves of Petrarch and Laura told on tea-cups. Which of the coronetted muses of the present *saturnalia* of Parnassus, where cooks and countesses jostle for precedency, does this sketch pourtray? Which of the Lady Charlottes and the Honourable Annas, who affect new patents of distinction, and think more of the honour bestowed by their publisher, than their pedigree, does this cap fit? Not one; for this literary *petite-maitresse*—this ama-

teur of frivolities, and inditer of philosophy—this collector of French toys, and collator of Irish chronicles—this trifler by taste, and author by necessity,

“Cet homme-là, Sire—c'est moi !”*

I don't defend this passion for trifles—I only expose it, as an illustrative item in the history of female authorship, which is so often reproached with a slovenly neglect of all that is feminine and frivolous.

When somebody presented the celebrated Mademoiselle Scuderie with a bunch of pretty seals, she

* “Opposed to this frivolous picture, take the picture of a celebrated German authoress, as described by a recent traveller :—

“DESCRIPTION OF A GERMAN LITERARY LADY.—Never shall I forget the first appearance, to me, of Madame de B. She was sitting, or rather reclining, in the most unaffected posture, with her legs crossed, and her hands clasped behind her head, on a large sofa—-one old, indeed, and crazy, but doubtless endeared to her by some association, perhaps with the days of her childhood ; for, from its colour, and dilapidations, and fashion, it could scarcely be more modern. Behind her, and on each side, extended a floor, or rather ocean of books, rising, in volumes, like wave upon wave, tossing and tumbling, and some, as it were, foaming open, and revealing their white margins. In the midst of these, like an island, stood a large old-fashioned mahogany table, and covered with various articles, which I might forbear to enumerate, if it were not interesting to the sensible mind to learn even the most trifling attributes of genius. Such persons will readily forgive me that I mention a large black tea-pot, tea-cup of antique China, an ink-stand with the owner's cipher, apparently scratched on the metal ; a pair of saucers, of divers patterns : a large phial labelled “*laudanum* ;” a tortoise-shell watch-case, a small plate of bread crusts, and a long hair comb, a tall wine-glass half filled with sugar of the brown description, a snuff-box, a pair of snuffers, a small miniature, a few twisted fragments of brown and blue paper, two slender candles, some small pieces of copper coin, and a single stocking, marked D. R. A. B.”

off by her religious habit, as Abbess de Fontrevault. Immediately without the balustrade stood Racine and Boileau—the former beckoning in the modest La Fontaine, who stood timidly at the door—the latter, with a pitch-fork, humorously affecting to keep off a crowd of bad poets, who were forcing their way to the presence and patronage of the young prince.

The merit and value of this superb toy was, that all these figures were accurate portraits, exquisitely done in wax, and presented by the illustrious originals themselves to Madame Théanges, for her classical and ingenious *étrenne*.

FAUTEUIL—BERGERE—ARM-CHAIR—
EPISCOPAL SEAT.

“Inutile a chi non reposa.”

Book of Emblems—Device, a Chair.

LAST night we were playing a *charade en action*. As Madame Catalani, and her clever son, with some other foreigners, were of the party, we played it in French. I personated an antiquated ultra *baronne*, restored to her *donjon* in Normandy, and receiving a visit from an old *châtelain* of the neighbourhood, who came to congratulate her on the restoration of all old things. The scene we made of giving *les honneurs de du fauteuil* to my neighbour, my horror at the indignity of offering a *chaise de paille* to an *ancien noble* of seven quarters; and the overthrow of the whole party, chairs and all, in the

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struggle of ceremony, occasioned a good deal of laughing. I borrowed the trait from a scene I had witnessed in the Faubourge, on my first arrival in Paris, when a great effort was making to restore the *fauteuil* to its ancient honours.

The history of arm-chairs would make an amusing volume, if given from the antique times to the present, from the *fauteuil* of the middle ages, when it had reached its highest political importance, down to the modern *dormeuse*, in which, at this moment, I am scribbling, *ex cathedra*! What a specimen of the progress of society it would embrace—what state secrets it would reveal—what sanguinary wars—what treaties of peace, what family ties dissolved—what courses of true love turned aside—all owing to the important *fauteuil*!

“Armed-chairs—chairs with a back—the stool of honour—the right hand and the left,” says Voltaire, “have, for many ages, been the important objects of diplomacy, and the subjects of illustrious quarrels.” Buonaparte, whose weakness it was to adopt the worn-out *étiquettes* of an order of things directly opposed to his own existence, raised the *fauteuil* along with the altar and the throne; and it is said, that, when Madame Letitia Buonaparte made her visit of ceremony, on the *accouchement* of her imperial daughter-in-law, the arm-chair was removed from the room, lest she (being, as she was, *roturière*, though the mother of an emperor, four kings, and two or three princesses) might presume to usurp its honours in the presence of the daughter of the Cesars, the descendant of the Hapsbourgs!

Alas, for the vicissitudes of human grandeur! There are those living, more *roturière* than the excellent Madame Buonaparte, who have since seated themselves on whatever chair they pleased, in the

presence of the Ex-empress of France, the now obscure Dutchess of Parma; who herself sat, confounded with other ladies, in the *salon* of an English peeress, obtaining no distinction, save what was conferred by the attention and courtesy of an English ambassadress. Oh! if the great would, or could, but feel how little they owe of the world's homage to themselves, and how much to their position, before some dreadful reverses teach them the sad truth, that they are but the signs of that power, which lies in principles, and not in persons.

The curule chair of the Romans had a certain respect attached to it, as being the seat of magistracy very different, however, from the awe which is inspired by the sight of a throne in the hearts of the loyal idolaters of modern absolutism. The luxurious Romans, who, when not in activity, lay extended, even at their meals, on couches, seem not to have considered a mere seat in connexion with rank and power. The Fabiuses and Catos borrowed no distinction from the privilege of sitting in an arm-chair. The form of the curule chair is preserved in the sculptured marble of some of the noble statues of antiquity, which are designed in the seated attitude. The ease of their position seems rather to result from the grace of the individual represented, than from the commodity of the chair, which is low-backed and simple in form. Its substance, however, was ivory, richly carved—a curious fact in the history of the arts.

It was with the barbarous lower ages that the arm-chair first acquired its modern consequence, and it continued to increase in political importance down to the French revolution. The code of etiquettes concerning the *fauteuil* in old France, was a consecrated volume. To claim *les honneurs du fauteuil*,

or to give them, determined the most knotty points of precedence which agitated dynasties, and disturbed the peace of kingdoms. The origin of this distinction lay very probably in the rarity of the object—in the rude unaccommodated and dreary stone towers, in which the ancestors of families of many quarters then sheltered their heads. The easy chair was reserved for the elder or chief of the family, who, in those patriarchal times, ruled with an iron despotism over his timid, but often unnatural offspring; for the son, who was not permitted to sit in the presence of his father, frequently usurped his dominions, and hurried him from his *fauteuil* to his grave. The filial history of the respectful and royal sons of Spain and Russia, is the epitome of the story of those times, when the *fauteuil* was the domestic throne of every tyrant *châtelain*, and the exclusive privilege of the great.

To know the full consequence attached to sitting in an arm-chair, the French memoirs must be deeply studied; particularly those, written in the simplicity of their hearts, by Dangeau and Mademoiselle Montpensier. The life of the "*grande Mademoiselle*" was one continued agony of quarrels on the subject of the *fauteuil* and the *chaise à dos*; and half the diplomacy of Europe in her time was occupied with discussions on similar subjects. Cardinal Richelieu, having refused to walk three steps beyond the door of his apartment (he was willing to walk two), to meet the English ambassador, who came to treat of the marriage of Charles the First with Henrietta of France, that marriage, of such importance to both crowns, was nearly broken off. The cardinal, however, affected sickness, and receiving the English duke in a *chaise longue*, thus avoided the odd step, without breaking off the alliance.

Louis the Thirteenth, desiring to hold a private council with his minister and master, Richelieu, was obliged to visit him in his bed-room, where he lay dangerously ill. But as a subject, though dying, could not be permitted to receive the king in bed, except the king was lying in bed also, Louis was wheeled in, on a *chaise longue*, and they both thus lay in state to discuss the affairs of the nation. Louis the Fourteenth observed the same form, when he went to visit the wounded hero Turenne.

In the olden times the easy chair, or *chaise de doléance*, was reserved for invalids, in the houses of the middle ranks of England and Germany; but the chair of "*le roi Dagobert*,"* if in existence, would have a chance of being discarded, even by the most zealous *voltigeur*, in favour of a modern *dormeuse*, with its easy fall, cushioned back, and pillows of iron, softer than down,—now at the disposition of every member of the family. In all that respects the comforts and commodity of life, the wisdom of our ancestors was confessedly at fault.

The two most interesting arm-chairs in existence are, the Shakspeare chair, late in the possession of Mrs. Garrick, and Voltaire's chair, which stood beside the fireplace in the Hôtel de Vilette, Rue Vau-

* The chair of the good King Dagobert is, perhaps, one of the oldest and most curious articles of furniture of the Christian era. In form, it resembles the curule chair of the Romans. The legs are more ancient, and of better workmanship, than the upper part; but tradition assigns its fabrication to the holy hands of St. Eloi. It was preserved for centuries in the treasury of the Abbey of St. Denis, and was regilt in the time of the Abbot Suger. In August, 1804, it was transported to Boulogne, for the distribution of the crosses of the Legion of Honour; and a medal, struck on that occasion, represents the modern Charlemagne, seated in this relic of *le bon Roi Dagobert*. It now takes its place, with other antiquities, in *la Bibliothèque du Roi*, at Paris.

girard, when I last saw it, in 1820. The inauguration chairs of the O'Neals, the O'Donnels, and the O'Briens would form long items of antiquarian research in the chapter of arm-chairs, too long probably for the patience of the general reader.

So much for the social arm-chair,—the *chaise à dos*, and *fauteuil* of the court—the *bergère* and *chaise à bras* of the château. But the history of the chair of the church—the episcopal chair—with all its sedentary rites, connected with the divine offices and high privileges of its incumbent, is of far more importance. The *where*, and the *how*, the princes of the church should sit enthroned above their prostrate flock, became an object of ecclesiastical attention in the early ages of Christianity; and scarcely had the primitive Christians issued from the caves and obscure places whence so many divine things were given out, than councils were held, and canons established the sites, and positions, and materials of the easy seats of the bishops and clergy. Then came the *absis*, and the *faldistorium*, or chair of state, used for pontifical duties; and then the episcopal thrones and patriarchal and papal chairs of Rome, all symbols of worldly power and spiritual pride, alike the objects of ambition and contest, and claimed, and struggled, and fought for, like the poor mondaine *fauteuil*, by prince bishops, who, in the early ages, were proud of a *wooden seat*, but who in process of time occupied chairs elevated and gorgeous as regal thrones.

The ruins of the old episcopal throne in the famous cathedral of Rouen, which has flourished from the fourth century, are now forsaken for a magnificent and luxurious chair, or *faldistorium*. The history of the origin and progress of the bishop's seat, as fixed in his church or cathedral, from the first Bishop of Canterbury, who humbly took his *sedes*

lignea, to the last whom Divine Grace has called to fill its sumptuous throne,* would in itself throw a strong light upon the history of the church of England. "*Que de choses dans un menuet !*" exclaimed a French dancing-master in an ecstasy at the mysteries he was teaching a royal pupil. *Que de choses dans un fauteuil !* One may write upon a fiddlestick, doggedly, if not learnedly. One of the best things Swift ever did write, was on a broomstick.

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

THE tendency in human affairs to proceed by impulses, is a curious fact in the history of the species. At certain indefinite epochs, and often without any very manifest cause, mankind are seized with some sudden passion, and are hurried with an almost universal fervour towards some particular object, which takes possession of the general imagination. The enthusiasm thus kindled, pervades all ranks, and masters all dispositions, giving a common tone and character to whole generations—until, exhausted by its own efforts, it gradually subsides, and gives place to other and newer caprices. This it is which constitutes the spirit of the age—an important matter of consideration for the young adventurer, at his outset in life. The passion for monkery, for crusading, for reformation in religion, for philosophy, for political economy, &c. &c., are cases in point, sufficiently notorious ; not to dwell upon the many minor move-

* See Somner's History of Canterbury, Appen. Scriptura, xvj.

ments of nations—such as the South Sea bubble, the tulip mania, mesmerism, craniology, &c., each of which, in its day, has turned the heads of the community, and formed, as it were, an episode in the history of man.

Notwithstanding some occasional absurdities into which this sympathetic susceptibility of our nature may have hurried particular societies, it is the great mainspring of improvement—the countervailing power to authority and precedent. Without such sudden *engouemens*, the world would not be driven from the beaten track; and the public intellect would lapse for ever into a state of stagnation, like that which has reigned among the Turks since the subsidence of their military and religious enthusiasm. As the impulse of a ship gives its power to the rudder, so the spirit of the age gives efficacy to genius. Scarcely an individual can be quoted as eminent, who did not flourish in an age of considerable excitement; for when the great mass of mankind are at rest, talent, clogged by the general sluggishness, in vain exerts its powers. Its excessive activity is *à charge*—its labours are not understood; and if not persecuted, are received with a chilling and paralyzing indifference. Between the accession of the House of Hanover and the American war, there was a manifest stagnation of the public mind in England; and the minor stars of Dodsley's galaxy shone forth, un eclipsed by the splendour of any first-rate luminary. During the struggles of the French revolution, on the contrary, a succession of geniuses of the highest order, in every department of literature, science, the arts, military and political affairs, &c. &c., added new honours to the British name, and hurried forward civilization with astonishing rapidity.

Those who have had the misfortune to be tied down to the uncongenial society of a *coterie*, to whose feelings and interests they were strangers, may have some notion of what it is to run counter to the spirit of the age, and to set up one's own systems against the mania of the public. Much as a man may be convinced of the truth of his own opinions, and satisfied as he may be of the error of the world's opposition, still it were well to be convinced of his own self-denial and forbearance, before he embarks in an open warfare with received notions. To act with sufficient ability to attract notice, is to become at once the marked victim of antiquated error and interested prejudice; and to maintain such a position requires irreproachable character, and a firmness that is not to be shaken by disappointment, nor turned aside by sarcasm or reproach. They, on the contrary, who have the good luck to stumble on a coincidence of feeling and opinion with the society in which they are merged, will find that the cards play themselves; and, without any extraordinary exertion of industry, talent, or virtue, they will easily win the whole game.

* It is not very long since the class of reformers embraced but a few individuals; and many must recollect the unmeasured obloquy incurred by certain individuals for the promulgation of truths, which were so unpalatable when first broached, but which soon became familiar, and then ceased to bestow notoriety, or to draw down persecution. Even in these times of free discussion, it is both easier and pleasanter to promote the cause of liberality under the shelter of whiggism, than to make an open avowal of the whole extent of the principle of reform, at which so many still start in

apprehension of danger to their own personal interests.

The opinions of the world are usually a mixture of small portions of truth, with an overwhelming mass of error. From among an infinite variety of shades, is formed a sort of average doctrine, which constitutes the opinion of the greatest number. Around this centre are accumulated the various extremes which represent the prejudices and interests of the smaller corps and categories in society. To belong to any of these corps ensures toleration, in proportion to their numbers and respectability; and the same truth may be advanced, with different success, accordingly as it is promulgated under the sanction of a powerful, or an inefficient name. The Unitarians are permitted openly to impugn the divinity of our Saviour; and the Quakers are allowed to reject all interference of priests; while those, who are vulgarly and quaintly called Free-thinkers, are punished for an idle jest against the established church. The former, existing in considerable bodies, are enabled to master opinion; while the latter, having few to sympathize with them, are opposed by all the prejudices and all the passions of society.

It is seldom that opinions are received purely and absolutely by the public; but most frequently they are modified by local and accidental coincidents. There is more toleration, for example, among Englishmen for Mahometanism in India, than for simple dissent at home. So, likewise, the party which would roast a papist alive in Ireland, looks with complacency on the re-establishment of the Pope on the throne of Italy. Whence is it that the same man should be contented that his coreligionist should be reviled and persecuted by our "ancient

ally" at Constantinople, while he resents the slightest deviation from the established creed in England? Merely because one of these facts stands co-ordinated with his habits and his interests, and the other exists in violation of them.

• It is not, then, so much the intrinsic opinion to be attacked, which is matter for consideration, as the point of view in which it may be presented, and the manner of effecting its separation from the interests in which it is involved. The attack upon established error should resemble that game which children play, by casting a bundle of small sticks into a confused heap; and then endeavouring to pick them out, one by one, without disturbing the rest. We should begin by casting about for the detached and isolated points, and next remove those which have the fewest connexions—leaving untouched the pieces in which there are the greatest implications till at last perhaps they will fall by their own weight.

Much also depends upon times and seasons. When the current of opinion runs strong, an expert swimmer will not directly breast it, but take advantage of back-waters and of sheltering prominences: but when the tide is on the turn, and the force of the stream is nearly spent, he dashes boldly into the middle of the waters, and gains his point by the shortest possible cut.

• It is by inattention to this fact, that effect is often mistaken for cause. Preachers and orators lay the French revolution to the charge of Voltaire and the philosophers, who were but the creatures of the revolutionary movement. They would neither have shown themselves so boldly, nor obtained so much sympathy, if the spirit of the age had not been pre-eminently coincident with, and favourable to, their efforts. Had Bacon lived in the twelfth century,

and had he, by a miracle, possessed the knowledge which he afterward displayed, he would have either been brought to the stake, or his books, through the neglect of his contemporaries, would have been consigned to the dust of libraries, to have awaited a more congenial and spirit-stirring epoch. Wickliff was as bold and as clear-sighted a reformer as Luther; but he was more in advance of his age: and his want of success was the penalty of the discrepancy.

In combatting error, it is a golden rule to leave unnoticed whatever is indifferent to the point at issue. In converting a Jew, it is unwise to begin by ostentatiously eating pork. Leave the Quaker in the undisturbed possession of his hat, and the Catholic in the quiet enjoyment of his red herring. In the same spirit, it is good to back truth by authority and precedent: for though mere reason is better argument, yet authority, by chiming in with the prejudices of the hearer, will in all probability be the more availing. There are thousands who would reject the doctrine of philosophical necessity, nakedly proposed, who would willingly embrace it, if disguised under the mask of grace and predestination; simply because a few grave names may be cited in favour of the latter opinion.

The interests and passions of those who may be hostile to a given reformation, are not all involved in an equal degree. There are thousands and tens of thousands who will accept of a principle, up to a certain point, where it begins to operate on themselves. With a few exceptions, all the world is beginning to be reconciled with free trade in every branch of industry,—but their own. It is therefore dangerous to push a principle at once to its utmost extreme. The further it is carried, the more

persons are alarmed, and the less is the shame attendant upon brutish opposition. The moderate, moreover, in all disputes, collect around them the half thinkers and half feelers—a powerful faction, embracing those who are too indolent to inquire, or too corrupt to desire a practical improvement to the fullest extent. For such personages a middle term is a convenient retreat; and by neutralizing their opposition, you gain time and a clearer stage. This may not always be very candid: but if the “*cost al egro*” system be allowable in oratory, it is no less justifiable where the grave interests of the species are at issue. The number of those who see questions in their wholeness, is very small; the mass are more moved by especial instances and examples.

In knowledge, nothing is isolated; and the establishment of one truth is the dethronement of many errors. With these, it is best to deal in detail; and await the gradual development of a growing spirit, before venturing upon points in which the age is not prepared to follow. Everybody admits that the Deity is wise and good: but he who should deduce all the necessary consequences of this abstract verity, would expose such a mass of inconsistencies and absurdities, as would bring the whole force of the many to bear against him; and would ensure for himself the palm of martyrdom, without advancing public opinion one iota. Proceed, therefore, like the snail, with your feelers before you; and reserve to yourself, by a timely halt, the privilege of never combating with more opponents at once than you feel able to overthrow. Disgraceful retreats are pregnant with fearful delays: for a *coup manqué* is followed by a revulsion of sentiment which may require the lapse of a generation to recover.

A point of prudence, equally commendable, is to
Vol. I.—R

avoid taking in hand too many simultaneous reforms. In this respect Voltaire was wiser than Rousseau, who levelled his attacks at once against the abuses of church and state. By respecting the nobility, while he attacked the clergy, Voltaire even now exercises a beneficial influence on French affairs. The Jesuits have at this moment many opponents among the old noblesse, who have derived their opinions on church government from that writer, simply because he spared the pretensions of their own class. In the field of argument, as in the field of battle, an undue extension of the line is accompanied by a corresponding weakness in all its points.

There is, however, one case in which a contrary method is more availing; namely, when the public spirit is not carried very powerfully in any certain direction, and when opinion stagnates. In such moments, the more startling and extravagant the novelty, the more likely it is to produce an impression. Authority and precedent are beaten down and trodden upon by a shock which unsettles all habitual notions: and an enthusiasm is unexpectedly engendered, which commences a new epoch in the history of nations. It was thus that the American revolution found its age; and that the political works of Thomas Paine produced an effect, which a writer of less daring and intensity could never have achieved. Under all circumstances, extreme opinions have the merit of setting the thinking part of the public to work; but when they are scattered *mal à propos*, it is with the certain shipwreck of the propounders; and often with a flux and reflux of sentiment, that eventually consumes more time and means, than are necessary to arrive at the proposed end, by a gentler and more undermining method.

These remarks will explain the partial successes

of writers, who have taken in one age and country more than in others. Newton and Locke were admired in England; long before they made their way on the Continent; but latterly, Locke has been more popular abroad than at home: because the spirit of the age, moving in contrary directions, has led the English back towards despotism in politics and mysticism in religion; whereas, abroad, it flowed in a full tide towards reason and liberality. It is now fashionable to question Locke's fundamental principle, not because an innate idea can be brought in evidence against him, but on account of certain supposed consequences to which his principle is said to lead—and this happens in the nineteenth century! So, likewise, Beccaria, Filangieri, and other writers of the same cast, have never attained the same popularity in England, as with their own countrymen; while Bentham, who at home is an object of sarcasm and suspicion, is admired on the Continent as the very prophet of legislation. A change in the spirit of the age is at this moment (1821) working a corresponding alteration in the reputation of the writers of the French Augustan epoch; who are losing much of their former popularity, or rather idolatry, among their countrymen; and are giving place to authors, whose ideas and manners are more consonant to the existing state of public feeling and opinion.

Knaves and hypocrites are perfectly aware of these truths: unless, indeed, it is the blind instinct of cupidity, which leads them so directly to their corrupt ends. But reformers in general either are ignorant of them, or disregard them. The enthusiasm which leads forward the advanced guard of opinion, but rarely allows an observance of what is merely prudential; and the high-minded votarist of

truth shrinks from whatever assumes the aspect of compromise, as from a degradation. The first promulgators of useful innovations are therefore usually the victims of their zeal. They gain the honour of the day with posterity; but in the mean time they are cast down, and form with their bodies the bridge over which the more calculating spirits of a future day pass in triumph to their end. Thus Romilly spent a life of disappointment and vexation, that Mr. Peel might reap the fruits of his labours; and thus the Archbishop of Canterbury enjoys a splendid income, for preaching the doctrines which brought Latimer and Ridley to the stake.

THE KEY OF THE BOOK-CASE.

" Casa mia, casa mia,
Piccolina che sia,
Tu sei sempre casa mia."*

WHERE did the Italians get these homely lines? they who have no "*casa piccolina*," and whose home is an opera box. Now I have just such a *casa* as this domestic maxim implies; and I love it beyond measure. Though often glad to leave it behind me, I always return to it with satisfaction. I never knew any, but the foolish and the worthless of my own sex, who did not feel a real pleasure in the performance of domestic duties; and though one may be sometimes inclined to leave behind, "*tous ses ma-*

* " My home, my home, though small it be,
Yet still that home is dear to me."

ris et tous ses enfans," as Madame de Coulanges has it, still a true woman always comes back with pride and delight to the fuss, and rummage, and self-importance of domestic legislation. The great must know less of this, than those whose fortunes are at odds with their tastes and position; and the blue stockings, of all ranks, affect to have souls above saucepans. But we of the trade, who have taken our places as candidates for the emoluments and honours of authorship, are not forced upon such affection.

"One of the advantages of being a wit," says Swift, "is the license it gives to play the fool;" and one of the privileges of a female writer who has no longer a name to make, is, that she may make her own—pudding, if she likes it. For myself, I am a heaven-born cook: but of this, more hereafter. Still, what I miss most, when I leave my own house, is not my *batterie de cuisine*, but my library. Not that it is as large as the Alexandrian, nor as curious as the Vatican; but that it is just that sort of library in which, as Madame de Sévigné says, "you cannot lay your hand on a volume without a desire to read it through."

Madonna mia! how well I know the smell of a country-house library! Being, by divine indignation, an author, people think I do nothing but read and write books, "eat paper, and drink ink," as Sir Nathaniel says; and are pleased to consider that which is but the episode, as the history of my life. It frequently happens that, before I have made acquaintance with half the rose-trees, smelled the geraniums, or swallowed a draught of the delicious air I left town expressly to breathe, I am presented with the key of the book-case—[I would as soon lock up my bells as my books, since the great merit of both is to

be always at hand]—so I go twisting and turning the said key into its rusty lock : and, *ouf!* the fust and the must, when the book-case is opened ! Then what a search for something one can read through in less than a twelvemonth. Out of every hundred volumes, there are scarcely more than six or seven works ; for country-house libraries are made up of folios, quartos, or large octavos, *pour le moins* ; except that here and there is a sort of thick, short, squat volume, that belongs to no class of form ; and every work runs from ten to fifteen volumes. The reason is, that country-house libraries are generally heir-looms, originally collected as a mark of gentility by the wisdom of the country-house ancestors. They consist of what are called standard books—books that would let the world stand still to the end of time !—composed and collected when knowledge, instead of being given, as now, in quintessential drops, was weighed out by the stone, or measured by the yard. Concentration in all things—the throwing off the rubbish, and getting at the element—is the true proof of excellence ; and it is now, in literature, as in medicine ; instead of being choked with a pint of bark mud, (all port wine as it may be,) we swallow a few pellucid drops of *quinine*, without wry faces or deep inspirations ! It formerly took a life to write a book, and half a one to read it. Oh, the “ Rollin’s Histories,” and “ Voyages round the World,” and the “ Cleliás and Cassandras,” and the poems in fifty-nine cantos—the folio “ Thoughts upon Nothing,” and the seven-volume ponderosity of “ Sir Charles Grandison !”

Denon, whose own work on Egypt, hit off, as it is, with his own peculiar *finesse* and spirit, (*touche fine et spirituelle*.) is a fair illustration of the genuine style of modern writing. Denon was the most

impatient person under the infliction of voluminous works (myself excepted) that I ever knew. It was a constant theme of abuse and laughter between us. One night, I was leaning on his arm, at a *soirée*, at the Prince de Beauveau's, when the excellent and estimable Monsieur S——, in passing close by us, trod on his foot: he turned to me, with an expression of pain, and said, "*Ah! ma chère petite, les dix-huit volumes m'ont tombé sur le pied!*"* And yet after all, I, too, have appeared pranked out in two quarto volumes, heavier than myself, and quite as tall: but of this presumptuous magnitude, I stood as guiltless as of the Talmud. Three small, compact, lady-like octavos were ever the utmost boundary of my authorial ambition. For all beyond this, my publishers were more in fault than I.

One exception I must make: I originally wrote my "Novice of St. Dominick" in ten goodly, stout volumes, which, with much humility, as I thought, I cut down to seven. With these seven—by far the heaviest part of my luggage—I arrived in London, and presented myself to Sir Richard Phillips, who advised me to take back my manuscript, like a good girl, and reduce it to five. "Insatiate monster, would not one suffice!" But down went the volumes; and when I took the remaining sibyl leaves to Sir Richard, he again begged they might be reduced to four. This was too much; though I verily believe, at this moment, that the publisher's good-natured consideration of my *amour propre* alone prevented him from stinting my exuberance to two volumes, which, perhaps, he ought to have done. The work, however, succeeded, in spite of its bulk, and still maintains a preference over my

* "The whole weight of his eighteen volumes was in his step."

lighter and better productions, in the estimation at least of my contemporaries, the ladies of a certain age, who first read its multitudinous pages, when they were as young as the author who wrote them; and who still mistake their own first, warm impressions for the merits of a work, which, truth to tell, had not too many to boast of.

Extreme youth, like extreme age, is naturally verbose. If the aged speak from the fulness of memory, the young are loquacious from the novelty and strength of their sensations. Youth, likewise, suspects not its own tritisms and plagiarisms; nor thinks it is telling what every body knows, and nobody cares for. The secret, the grand secret, that "*l'art d'ennuyer est l'art de tout dire*"*—that to exhaust a subject is not to illustrate it—is unknown to the young, who know so little, and who feel so much.

When I wrote "The Novice," two volumes or ten were alike to me. But I must keep the history of my authorship for another time. It would make a cat laugh: alas! it has often made me cry!

APOTHECARIES.

A *propes* to *quinine*, that pretty, elegant medicine, that looks like distilled diamonds, or the rill that runs between the ornamented banks of my dear Kilfane. This getting at quintessences is rather injurious to the craft and mystery of compounding. When people cease to take medicine by the pint,

* The art of being tiresome consists in leaving nothing unsaid.

adieu to Messieurs les Apothicaires! This was confessed, with much *naïveté*, lately, by one of the profession, who left it, to undertake an extensive brewery. Being asked the motive of this change, he said, "The public will now swallow my drugs by the quart, instead of the phial."

How many professions depend upon the ignorance of the age in which they flourish. In the middle ages, the apothecaries were general shopkeepers, and, in England, for a long time, the exclusive dealers in wine. In Italy, where so many traces of the middle ages still subsist unchanged, the apothecary is called, to this day, *speziale*, or spice-dealer. When we resided at Como, we purchased our tea, sugar, wax-lights, oils, and medicines, all at the same shop. Up to the time of James the First, the apothecaries of London were not a distinct body, but belonged to the Grocers' Company. The probability is, that humanity gained little by the change; for a trade, when turned into a mystery, is but better fitted to play upon the innate gullibility of man. The *hocus-pocus* of pouring one bottle into another, lost nothing in the hands of persons, who assumed the right of administering, by gallons, their own compositions.

Rabelais, by-the-by, was the son of an apothecary, who was Seigneur de la Devinière. Could this feudal lord of lands have been an apothecary, in the modern sense of the word?—or was he not rather a wholesale general merchant?

The Chinese, in their dull wisdom, have a curious custom in their great towns—a substitute for our dispensaries. A stone, of many cubits high, is erected in some public place, with the names and prices of every medicine inscribed; and when the poor want physic, they apply to the treasury, and get the price

of the drug required. This speaks volumes for the probity of the people. If, in Ireland, the treasury was authorized thus to advance the purchase-money of medicines to the poor, instead of their applying to the Medical-Hall, I fear their steps would more probably wander to the whiskey-shop. This public pricing of drugs bespeaks also great and general ignorance among the people, who are not considered capable of purchasing the outlandish commodity. How different from the modern American, who buys not only his physic, but his theology, where and how he pleases!

In our own times there has been a vast revolution in apothecaries. As to the mere outward man, what a difference between the formal proprietor of a Dalmahoy-wig, and a snuff-coloured or crimson suit of dittoes, an amber-headed cane, and scarlet *roquelaure*, (who phlebotomized our fathers, with the solemn air of his own Galen's-head,) and the spruce, dapper incumbent of a cabriolet, who now bounds up to your knocker with a hop-step-and-a-jump! But the "march of intellect" has done much more still for the interior. Every professional man must, in these days, know something of his business; and the apothecary, whose mental stock in trade is not as much improved as his *matériel*, will have poor chance of employment.—The dealers in physic first began as conjurers; then figured as priests; next sunk into retainers of hard words; and finally have become almost as reasonable and intelligible mortals, as the patients to whom they administer. What will this jacobinical age come to next?

MAXIMS—PORTRAITS.

Nobody writes maxims now. Maxims do not belong to the state of intellect and literature of the present age. In times when knowledge was the exclusive property of a particular class, and when mankind leaned upon the opinions of the learned, they were more apt to refer their conduct to a well established rule, than to govern it by their own reflections. These were the times for "wise saws and modern instances." Men now think for themselves, and do not require recipes for thinking. It is remarkable, that the most celebrated maxim-mongers of modern times were men of quality; and that their aphorisms are chiefly applicable to the exigencies, vices, and virtues of a court, of which the flower of maxim-mongers has said, "It does not render us happy, while it prevents the search of happiness in other directions."

Towards the middle of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, maxims became a rage in France. Their terseness, point, and epigrammatic turn, particularly adapted them to *l'esprit du siècle* and to a language made up of phrases. All the coteries of the Hôtels La Rochefoucauld, Carnavalet, D'Albret, &c. &c., including all the genuine wit and taste of the day, as opposed to the Hôtel Rambouillet and other "*bureaux d'esprit*," dealt largely in maxims. The Duc de Rochefoucauld published his, and distanced all competitors. The philosophy of more enlightened times owed much to this breviary of practical and worldly experience. Helvetius bor-

rowed from it his leading doctrine; and *Huné*, without acknowledging the obligation, stood deeply indebted to its dogmas for his opinions.

What a sensation the "Maxims" must have made at Versailles, when they first came out, and

"Each cried, 'that is levelled at me.'"

Mesdames de La Fayette, Sévigné, Coulange, Cornuel, and others of the female wits who surrounded the gouty chair of the once brilliant cavalier of the beautiful De Longueville, saw the work in MS. long before it was published, and probably helped the illustrious author to some of its poignant maxims, to which female *finesse* seems to have lent its delicacy and its bitterness. It was from this very manuscript that a splendid edition of the work was published, some years back, by the Rochefoucauld family, and edited by Mons. Suard, the late perpetual Secretary of the Academy; who assured me, not only that the work was printed from this precious morsel of autography, but that he was further assisted in his editorial capacity by a copy of the first printed edition, which was marked all over with the duke's own corrections, erasures, and marginal notes.

One morning, in Paris (1818), as I sat reading a letter of Madame de Sévigné, dated from the Hôtel de la Rochefoucauld, the Count G—— de la R—— was announced. I was so deep in the *coterie* of Le Faubourg, that I started, and expected to find the coadjutor along with him. "I have brought you," said my noble visiter, "a little *étrenne*;" and he presented me with the works of his illustrious ancestor—*Me voilà donc* a link in the chain with times and persons who so early got possession of my

mind and imagination, through the accidents of my miscellaneous and unguided studies. There is a magic in an historical name, that no democracy of opinion or principle can resist, except in the dull and unlettered; and it is to the glory of some of the greatest families of France, that they were illustrated by some highly-gifted and highly-spirited member, who enhanced the advantages of descent and birth, and redeemed their class from the popular odium which the vices and meanness of its majority incurred.

Before the fashion of maxim-making went out, the fashion of portrait-making came in: every body wrote every body's portrait. Two of the best portraits extant are those of Cardinal de Retz, by his old enemy and late friend, the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, and that of Madame de Sévigné, by Madame de la Fayette. "*La grande princesse*," Mademoiselle de Montpensier, in her coarse, vulgar, but natural way, has given a number of contemporary portraits, through her amusing memoirs. All her sketches of Charles II., in his youthful days, when he was paying his addresses to her, are admirable; though very unlike the frank, generous, and devoted cavalier who figures as the royal hero in one of Sir W. Scott's novels. His utter ignorance of his own affairs—his passion for dogs and horses, and his spending all his time in learning to dance the *triolet**—which, with his declining a dish of ortolans, and throwing himself on a piece of beef and a shoulder of mutton, † finally decided her to refuse him—are

* "Je vous vois ici avec douleur dansant le triolet, et vous divertir lorsque vous devriez être en lieu, où vous vous fassiez casser la tête, ou vous remettre la couronne sur la tête."

† "Je conçus de lui une fort mauvaise opinion d'être roi à son âge, et n'avoir aucune connaissance des affaires. ce n'est

admirable touches both of character and manner, and make up a faithful portrait of the worthless, profligate, and "mutton-eating king," than any on record. The reason is, that it was drawn from the life, without any reference to party or posterity.

In the reign of the Regent Orleans, a work, called *Galerie des Peintres*, collected all the "portraits" of the time, without any mercy to the originals, and consequently had a considerable vogue. One of the prettiest and best-natured works of this description I know, is still, I believe, in MS. It is by the celebrated Madame Albrizzi, of Venice, whose acquaintance I had the pleasure of making at Padua, and who speaks in pictures, and may well write them—a charming and rare art! The Albrizzi Gallery is enriched with the most eminent characters of the last half century. Her friend, and once devoted admirer, Denon, has found a conspicuous place in it, *bien encadré*. He, in return, has engraved a picture of Madame Albrizzi, extremely like, and worthy of its fair model. He sent me a copy, a few weeks before his death, with one of his own.

Lady C. L— was accused of painting the portrait of Lord Byron in Glenarvon, though not *en beau*. One day, at a dinner party at Copet Madame de Staël, addressing Lord Byron across the table, asked, in her *sans façon* way, "Is it true my lord, that you are the original of Glenarvon?" "It may be so," he replied, "but I never sat for it."

Every body, who writes novels, now labour under the imputation of putting forth their friend

pas que je n'eusse par là dû reconnaître mon sang. Les Bons sont gens fort appliqués aux bagatelles, et peu solides. ne mangea point d'ortolons, il se jeta sur une pièce de bœuf et sur une épaule de mouton, comme s'il n'y eut que cela."

and enemies "in their books." No "kindred or propinquity" excludes the suspicion. No one is thus accused more than I am; and no one is more innocent of the charge. Except in the instance of a few public characters, which are fair game, all my sketches have been of the species or genus, and never of the individual. Still I think I could draw a character from the life, if I should set about it.

Voyons—"My dear friend Mrs. * * * is one of those who—" But no; I'll keep my dear friend as sportsmen keep bag foxes; to let her loose on a future and more favourable occasion for showing sport.

HUMAN ANIMALITY.

"His intellect is not replenished—he is only an animal, only sensible in the duller parts."

SHAKSPEARE.

THE chances of my visiting list brought to my boudoir this morning two such pretty creatures, male and female, so brilliant and so bird-like, that I thought they had escaped from a groupe of tropical specimens that stood in a corner of the room, and which they very much resembled. There was the bill, and the beak, and the bright plumage, and elegant form; and not one sound of melody in their discordant voices—not one idea in their vacant heads: and so they chirped, and chattered, without ceasing, with all their emulative noise and volubility of bores and birds. They had neither of them met

before; and, mutually excited and mutually pleased, they so ruffled and fluttered their feathers at each other, that I really longed to catch both, to shut them up together in the same cage, and add them to my collection of curiosities, natural, and unnatural.

These two creatures can never have any conduct, for they are evidently and organically deficient in their judgment; those bird-shaped heads, with their disproportioned beaks, and falling-in of the lower part of the facial structure, always produce self-willed folly—the obstinacy which arises from the inability to receive an impression. One of my pretty visitors has recently and strongly evinced this species of imperturbability. Persons who resemble brute animals, are generally deficient in intellect. Men who have the low, shallow forehead of the bull-dog, will prefer Mendoza to Coke upon Littleton; and send them as you may to the bar or to the pulpit, they will live and die prize-fighters—if not in the ring at Hockley, at least in the circle of their friends and acquaintance, to whom their pugnacity will be a perpetual annoyance.

Men who resemble monkeys (and I know several who do), who have small, close-meeting eyes, are generally rogues, or at least extremely cunning; but it is the cunning which is without wisdom—precisely the species of intelligence ascribed to the amusing animal they resemble. Men, who resemble horses, may succeed by force of volition in particular careers, where will is more requisite, than development of intellect; but the horse-faced gentleman could never truly answer in the affirmative to poor Maturin's habitual question, on a first introduction—"Are you intellectual?"

I believe it is an allowed fact in physics, that the extreme facial development, which goes to the phy-

stigmomy of our horse-faced friends, is always at the expense of the brain ; for the horse is a most stupid animal, thorough-breed him as you may. Confide in your dog, your cat, your mule, your ass, (a most misrepresented animal, by-the-by,) but beware of your horse ! Train, break, educate, and harness him, he is never to be trusted. If I had the task allotted me of selecting those to whom the destiny of a nation was to be committed, I should never choose men who bore an obvious resemblance to any of the race of brute animals : they must be morally defective somehow or other. The head of a bird is not only a moral defect, but a positive animal deformity. A horse's head is not a deformity, but it is evidently a very inferior organization. Before the representatives of the people are chosen by the people, who themselves have been likened, by a great statesman and philosopher, to pigs, and called a swinish multitude, I would have them examined by the suffrages of a committee of eminent physiologists, anatomists, physicians, and surgeons.

Well, all this may be nonsense ; but it is *my sense* : *tale, quale, I give it as I have it.* "A homely thing, Sir, but a thing of my own," as Touchstone says ; and so, there it is !

MY REVIEWERS.

Tout ce qui s'attache à la peau des malheureux gens de lettres."

FIGARO.

THERE is nothing so droll as the way in which reviews are sometimes got up—the manner in which “the charge is prepared,” and sentence of death pronounced by the awful “we’s,” against poor authors, like myself, who have had their little success, not only without the “metaphysical aid” of reviewers, but in absolute defiance of their fulminations.

The review of “*Salvator Rosa*” was perpetrated after this fashion. The great well-known of a great review, in distributing work to the little unknowns who write under him, transmitted a copy of mine to be cut up by a certain cockney liberal, the Lycurgus of Bow-bells, and the Solon of the Poultry. The book, thus marked for cutting by the top-sawyer, fell into the hands of one who mentioned it to the author. *Pardi!* it was “cut and come again!”—all scored, underlined, and marginally-noted with square and rule canons of criticism—as a guide to the London journeyman, who knew as much of “*Salvator*” and the arts, as he did of the interior of Devonshire-house, or the Vatican. But no matter: “*puis donc qu’il suffisoit en ce tems-là d’avoir la figure d’homme pour se mêler de critiquer*”—he applied himself to the job, and a long-inflated, bitter article was done, as per order, full of mis-statements and misrepresentations; when “one

sad doubt arose," of a much less conclusive tendency than that of Parnell's "Hermit," but on a point of more immediate personal interest. The reviewer, *à commandement*, was not only a journeyman sawyer of the great Edinburgh pit, but he was also on Mr Colburn's list of "my authors;" and as the authoress of "Salvator" was the queen-bee of that gentleman's authorical hive, there was no knowing how the matter might be taken, or how far it might offend Mr. Colburn to attack his queen-bee, and stop the sale of a work upon which he had expended a considerable price. To set his mind at ease, then, the *exécuteur des hautes œuvres* of the literary justiciary of Edinburgh took his review to New Burlington-street, for inspection: but, just as he was in the act of showing his MS., the subject of its vituperations was announced; who, having *les petites entrées* of the publisher's study, followed the servant sufficiently closely, to catch a glimpse of the long and *à-devant* white stocking of the reviewer, in his escape by another door.

"Who have I frightened away?" asked "the lively little lady," as the Quarterly calls her, when it does not call her an "odious worm!"

"Only the reviewer of 'Salvator Rosa' in the forthcoming Edinburgh," replied the biblioplist.

"And what does he say?"

"Why, it is, on the whole, rather bitter—it is indeed!"

"May I look at it? for there it lies, I know upon instinct."

"I think you had better not. Besides, it is a point of honour—indeed it is out of the question."

"Oh! honour among thieves! Will you let him publish it? for I take it for granted he is one of your Johnny Raws."

"Why, indeed—that is, I do not think it can do any harm. The attack on 'France' sold two editions, you know."

"Oh! if it is to serve *your* sale, *laissez faire!*"

"The book has already done its business; but if your ladyship object—"

"I! Oh dear, no; let the man earn his money. By-the-by, who is he?"

"Who is he? Oh, I cannot—that is—upon my honour, I cannot tell you. Clever man, though—a popular author—he is indeed!"

"You won't tell me his name?"

"I cannot, indeed—it is quite out of the question, Lady M——."

"Well, I'll tell you!"

Le fermier de mon talent opened his eyes! "Indeed, Lady M——, you cannot even guess who it is. Besides, you really—that is, I should not tell you, if you did."

"It is Mr. * * *!" and I announced the name of my Zoilus.

"Dear me!—well, now, really, you are so odd; but you are mistaken—you are, indeed!"

"I was not mistaken; nor did I know any just cause or impediment why I should not denounce my critical executioner, who has shown me so little mercy, so little justice! There is something so revolting in hired misrepresentation—something so mutually degrading, in a task thus given, and thus performed—it belongs so peculiarly to the *canaille* of literature, who stab for pay, like bolder (and honest) assassins, that the soul sickens when talent, and supposed liberality, desert the standard of independent opinion, to enlist in the *bande noire* of organized vituperators, or enrol in the troop of well-paid puffers and party panegyrist! It is, therefore, perhaps,

for the interests of literature and morality that an exposure of such literary *girouettism* should be made; and yet I cannot seriously denounce even a public enemy. Though I may have "stirred up with a long pole"* the deathless vengeance of the Literary Gazette or have *rompu la paille* with the higher powers of the Quarterly, in return for the seven deadly sins, for which they have excommunicated me in their Index Expurgatorius, still I have always rather fenced with my foes in fun, than sparred with them in spite—I have never been the first to announce, nor denounce, the names of the calumniators who have endeavoured to blacken and to slander mine; and even now, leaving my Bowbell Reviewer to public detection, as I have done others of my critical assailants, whom I have trotted out for public amusement (nor failed in the intention), I thus give my wrongs to the wind, and his name, in a whisper, to the safe ears of our mutual publisher. For his article on Salvator, I leave it untouched and unanswered, to mark an epoch of *décadence* in that great periodical, which, in the better energy of its pristinè vigour, was wont to consecrate its severity by the general justice of its attacks, and the brilliant talent with which they were executed.

And now, instead of gratifying my revenge, I will do what is so much more gracious, and so much more consonant to my sex, character, and country. I will gratify my vanity, by recording the opinion of one on the subject of Salvator Rosa, in every way qualified to judge of all in which the arts are concerned; of one who has, in his own exquisite works, left proofs of a finer tact in literature, than all the critical acumen from Aristotle to the Aristarchus of

* See letter to the Reviewers of Italy, prefixed to the third edition of that work.

Modern Athens included. I mean the author of *Egypt*, the *Directeur de Musée Français*, the Baron Denon. I have the less scruple in recording the opinions of this illustrious writer and artist, on the subject of my *Life of Salvator*, because it is the very reverse of indiscriminate approbation.

Salvator Rosa, considered as the rival of Poussin, ("the god" of Denon's idolatry,) was not viewed with any favourable prepossession by the proud compatriot of "the Poet of Painters:" for Denon, though long standing at the head of the cognoscenti of Europe, and revered as their Coryphæus, had the heroic weakness of nationality, the foible of the patriotic; and the comparative merits of the two great contemporaries of THE PINCIO were too often brought in contrast by the *Romanticists* of the day, not to imbitter a little the feelings of the elegant classicist, whose love of the arts, as they existed in the antique world, was confirmed among the ruins of Rome, and in the gallery of the Capitol, where, both as a minister and an exile, the deepest of his impressions were taken, and the happiest of his days passed.

Au reste—to account for the rather odd appellations of "*Drôle de corps*," and "*Vol au vent*," used in these letters, they were mutually given and accepted in the gayety and intimacy of a friendship, by which I was so much and so long distinguished—the mutual *sobriquets* passed into our correspondence, which continued till within a few weeks of his death. It is from that correspondence, that I now, for the benefit of the arts, and the gratification of their lovers, as much as in my own defence against an unjust, misrepresenting, and hired criticism, select and transcribe two letters* on the sub-

* Although the first letter does not more than allude to the immediate subject before me, the public, I think, will not be

ject of my publication of the "Life and Times of Salvator Rosa."

"To Lady Morgan, Dublin."

"MON CHER DRÔLE DE CORPS,

"JE viens d'apprendre que la traduction de Salvator Rosa paroissoit depuis quelques jours. Le premier qui m'en a parlé, est Monsieur de Ségur,* qui m'a dit, qu'il l'avoit dévoré; que non seulement c'étoit un ouvrage charmant, mais qu'il étoit d'un mérite très-distingué. D'autres m'en ont parlé avec enthousiasme. Ces rapports m'ont fait sentir combien je vous aime; car j'étois tenté de remercier ces messieurs du plaisir qu'ils avoient eu. J'ai vite envoyé chercher l'ouvrage; et je vais tâcher de lire avec réflexion, avant de vous en parler.

"J'espère que vous allez de suite vous mettre à écrire le roman de Drôle de corps et de Vol au vent. N'attendez pas pour le dénouement, que vous mourriez de douleur de la perte que vous viendrez à faire de moi. Je crois qu'il vaut mieux que je vous enlève, que le chevalier furieux cherche nos traces, pour nous poignarder, et se tuer après, et que nous nous perdions tous trois dans le désert de Zara. En attendant, je vois envoyé mon portrait, qu'il faut tâcher de dérober à la jalouse fureur du Chevalier, qui aura, sans doute, anéanti une

sorry to possess, in its integrity, so good a specimen of the grace and playfulness of Mons. Denon's turn of mind, which, in one of his advanced age, is peculiar to the climate and temperament of France.

*The celebrated Comte de Ségur, the ambassador to Catharine of Russia, and one of the most distinguished authors which modern France has produced. His own memoirs, lately published, have added a brilliant gem to the bright galaxy of French autobiography.

autre épreuve, que je vous avois envoyé, et dont vous ne me parlez pas. Dites-lui, cependant quelques tendresses ; car malgré les horreurs qu'il doit faire dans le roman, je me sens pour lui un sentiment que j ne saurois définir.

“ Notre pauvre Mad. — est véritablement malade depuis six mois, et cependant n'est pas changée. Elle veut vous écrire : mais si je voulois l'attendre, peut-être ma lettre ne vous arriveroit-elle jamais.

“ Monsieur E. vous remettra une notice que je viens de faire, dont il n'y a que cinquante épreuves, pour lui donner de la préciosité. Un petit portrait improvisé par le meilleur lithographe, auquel j'ai ajouté celui du dit lithographe nommé Mauresse, et ma portière, — celle qui vous introduisoit, à qui j'avois défendu de dormir, pendant que vous étiez ici, et qui se repose après votre départ.

“ Vous ne savez peut-être pas, cher Drôle de corps, que votre Vol au vent a eu l'honneur d'être admis comme membre de votre académie de Dublin. Je joins ici une lettre de remerciemens à l'académie, que je vous prie de remettre à Mr le Président ; je vous prie aussi de renouveler à Monsieur Davis (qui a bien voulu me donner la première nouvelle de mon admission) toutes mes actions de grace. Je lui ai déjà écrit ; mais il est fort possible qu'il n'ait pas reçu ma lettre, attendu que tout ce que j'écris en Angleterre et en Irlande est régulièrement retenu ; — sans doute, pour le faire imprimer, lorsqu'il y en aura assez pour former un volume.

“ Je vous dirai que votre portrait m'a fait grand plaisir, quoique le nez soit trop gros. Mais il est gravé avec finesse et délicatesse ; et l'aspect général m'est agréable.

“ Je suis bien de votre avis relativement à nos

compatriotes. Cependant il y en a peut-être encore jusqu'à quatre qu'il faut distinguer de la tourbe regnante.

"Adieu, cher Drôle de corps ; je vous aime bien, et suis bien aise de vous aimer.

"Votre Vol au vent,

"DENON,

"*Le 19 Mars, 1824.*

"Voici un petit portrait de Salvator Rosa, qu'autrefois j'ai gravé à la hâte ; je vous en enverrai un autre, sur une boîte, par la première occasion."

"*To Lady Morgan, Dublin.*

"**CHER DRÔLE DE CORPS,**

"JE lis avec un plaisir extrême votre Salvator Rosa. L'introduction est une superbe chose. Ensuite il faut que vous me permettez de vous observer, que vous prenez trop parti dans la guerre des artistes. S. Rosa avoit bec et ongles pour se défendre, et il en usoit même la plus part du temps offensivement ; c'étoit un habile homme, mais fort mauvais coucheur. On pouvoit l'admirer, se plaire avec lui ; mais il devoit être très-difficile de l'aimer. Vous le peignez comme libéral, et vous le laissez voir plus que glorieux, farouche, fastueux, hautain, despote s'il avoit pu : furieux pendant toute sa vie d'être regardé comme un peintre de genre, tandis qu'il n'auroit été que cela, si dans les dernières années de sa vie, il ne se fut avisé de faire quatre ou cinq tableaux d'histoire. Après cela, mon cher Drôle de corps, vous l'avez trop loué comme graveur. Dans ces planches il a écrit ses compositions, la fougue de ses pensées ; mais sa pointe est lâche et vagabonde : et dans ce genre, il a été ni dessinateur ni coloriste. Enfin je vais peut-être vous faire sauter

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en l'air, quand je vous dirai que la moindre gravure de Rembrandt est préférable à la plus belle de Salvator Rosa. Du reste, cher Drôle de corps, vous avez atteint le but principal de votre ouvrage, qui est de faire connoître le siècle, que vous avez peint jusqu'à l'illusion, tellement qu'en le lisant je me croyois de la société de tous ces gens-là.

“Quand vous ferez une seconde édition, souvenez-vous, chère amie, de mieux traiter le portrait du Poussin, qui étoit aussi modeste qu'il étoit grand. A la vérité, il ne savoit ni chanter, ni jouer de farces dans la rue, mais comme peintre d'histoire, votre enragé petit maître n'est qu'un nain près de ce Colosse. Quand on veut louer ses amis, il faut bien se garder de certains reapprochements, et de réveiller des comparaisons qu'ils ne peuvent soutenir. Songez que le Poussin fut le créateur du paysage historique, et le maître de son gendre le Gouaspe; et que les seuls tableaux du Déluge, et Diogène brisant la tasse, surpassent tout ce que le Salvator Rosa a fait en paysage, pour la pensée, pour la poésie, et même pour la couleur. Quant à la composition, à la gravité, et à la philosophie de l'histoire, le Poussin est peut-être le premier de tous les peintres. Il faut donc vous dire, mon cher Drôle de corps, que dans la promenade des deux sociétés qui se rencontrent, j'étois dans celle de Poussin; et que vous m'offensez en tournant en ridicule mon patron, et ma juste admiration pour lui.

“*Fidatevi de me*, qui vous parle de sang froid comme ami, charmé que vous ayez fait un ouvrage qui vous fera à tout jamais beaucoup d'honneur, et que j'ai lu avec cet intérêt, qui rend le succès de l'amitié si doux à partager.

“Mille tendres amitiés bien sincères.

“*Le 14 Avril.*”

EXCLAMATIONS.

COLD-BLOODED nations deal but little in exclamations ; they belong to the petulance of strong impulses, and to ardent temperaments, national and individual. The Laplanders neither invoke, exclaim, nor imprecate ; the French and Italians are continually doing all three. Quakers, whose education teaches them to "set a pulse and preach their blood to reason," scarcely ever resort to exclamations, to express their feelings. The English are not exclaimers ; their forms for this purpose are few and foolish ; and when they go beyond the *niaiserie* of "dear me !" "bless me !" "my stars !" they fall into downright imprecation. The Irish, the petulant Irish, are great exclaimers. Like the Italians, they borrow their exclamations from their creed ; and when under strong excitement, pronounce in piety, that which, to the Calvinistical severity of English protestant ears, would sound very like profanation !

The Italians borrow their exclamations alike from their religion and the antique faith of their great progenitors ; and *Per Bacco ! Cospetto ! "Jehovah, Jove, or Lord,"* come with equal and frequent facility to their lips. They invoke, exclaim, and apostrophise, upon all occasions, trivial or important. A fisherwoman in the piazza of the Pantheon, will resort to every vow and invocation of the ancient or modern faith of Rome, to dispose of her stale fish on the evening of a fast day ; and will express her surprise or indignation at an undervaluing chapman,

who rejects her eels, or resists her turbot, by a volley of "*Madonna Mia's!*" "*Sacro Sacramento's!*" and "*Madre di Dio's!*" The French have a number of charming exclamations and apostrophies; they have also many that are quaint and simple, and extremely effective in low comedy. Molière abounds in them; and the humour and the *à propos* of his *ouf!* and *ouais!* is quite indefinable. Denon and I got into the habit of *ouf-ing* and *ouais-ing* at each other, until, with me, it became a *tic*, putting my native Irish "*ahs!*" and "*ochs!*" in abeyance; and it is as much as I can do to resist my interjectory *oufs!* and *ouais!* even on paper, and in the regular way of professed authorship!

END OF VOL. I.

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